



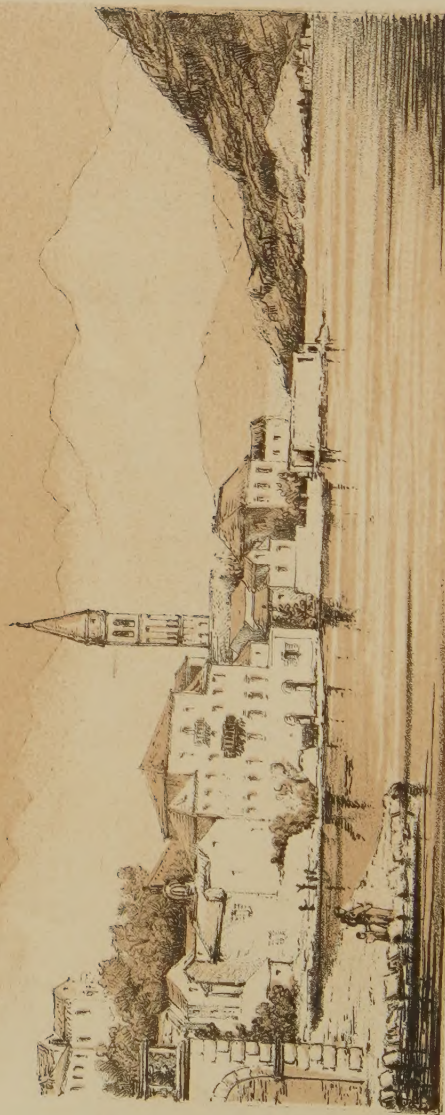


Joseph Carroll

to Staples Town Rd

Carroll





HANNAH IMP

PERASTRO.



FOUR MONTHS' CRUISE  
IN  
A SAILING YACHT



BY  
LADY ERNESTINE EDGCUMBE  
AND  
LADY MARY WOOD



# FOUR MONTHS' CRUISE

IN

## A SAILING YACHT

BY

LADY ERNESTINE EDGCUMBE

AND

LADY MARY WOOD

"The anchor heaves! the ship swings free!  
Our sails swell full! To sea! To sea!"

*With Illustrations.*

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## CONTENTS.

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| CHAPTER                                    | PAGE |
|--------------------------------------------|------|
| I. EN ROUTE . . . . .                      | 1    |
| II. ALGIERS . . . . .                      | 8    |
| III. IN THE ARAB QUARTER . . . . .         | 18   |
| IV. CAST AWAY . . . . .                    | 26   |
| V. PHILIPPEVILLE AND CONSTANTINE . . . . . | 46   |
| VI. COASTING TO CARTHAGE . . . . .         | 61   |
| VII. TUNIS . . . . .                       | 74   |
| VIII. AN ARAB HAREM . . . . .              | 87   |
| IX. MALTA . . . . .                        | 98   |
| X. MALTA (CONTINUED) . . . . .             | 102  |
| XI. THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN . . . . .      | 119  |
| XII. SIGHT-SEEING . . . . .                | 129  |
| XIII. HAGIAR KHEM . . . . .                | 145  |
| XIV. 'FLOATING FORTRESSES' . . . . .       | 153  |
| XV. THE WORLD'S GIRDLE . . . . .           | 169  |
| XVI. A BALL ON BOARD SHIP . . . . .        | 183  |
| XVII. GOOD-BYE TO MALTA . . . . .          | 190  |

|        |                                     |     |
|--------|-------------------------------------|-----|
| XVIII. | CLASSIC GROUND . . . . .            | 195 |
| XIX.   | CORFU AND AVLONA BAY . . . . .      | 214 |
| XX.    | A NICE BIT OF SEAMANSHIP . . . . .  | 228 |
| XXI.   | CETTINJE . . . . .                  | 235 |
| XXII.  | SAN GEORGIO AND SCARPELLO . . . . . | 248 |
| XXIII. | DALMATIAN TOWNS . . . . .           | 261 |
| XXIV.  | SEBENICO . . . . .                  | 272 |
| XXV.   | ZARA AND POLA . . . . .             | 287 |
| XXVI.  | HOMEWARD BOUND . . . . .            | 302 |

## ILLUSTRATIONS,

DRAWN ON STONE BY LADY MARY WOOD.

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|                                       |                        |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| PERASTRO . . . . .                    | <i>Frontispiece.</i>   |
| THE YACHT 'ARIADNE' . . . .           | <i>Vignette.</i>       |
| MAP, SHOWING ROUTE OF 'ARIADNE' .     | <i>To face page 26</i> |
| NATURAL ARCH AT CONSTANTINE . . . . „ | 56                     |
| HAGIAR KHEM, MALTA . . . . „          | 146                    |
| CATTARO . . . . .                     | 230                    |
| CETTINJE . . . . .                    | 242                    |
| SEBENICO CATHEDRAL . . . . „          | 274                    |







# FOUR MONTHS' CRUISE

IN A

SAILING YACHT.

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## CHAPTER I.

EN ROUTE.

**D**RIVING down one of the steep, narrow streets of Malta one afternoon towards the quay, we lamented ourselves over the lightness of our poor empty purses, and in the same breath wished we had bought another of those lovely mule cloths which were perpetually leading us into temptation.

‘The only thing to do is to write a

book, and give an account of our cruise,' said one of the party.

'So we will,' said E. 'Happy thought! and we will share the profits.'

'So we will.'

'Or the other thing,' unkindly murmured F. And we gaily trotted away down the hill, our spirits rising high at the thought that we might now be a little more reckless and a little more extravagant than hitherto.

'Aha!' says our enemy, as he rubs his hands with fiendish glee, 'so they are writing a book.'

We must disarm that enemy at once. Do not expect much, and then you will not be disappointed.

We are aware beforehand of its weak points; we will save our critics the trouble of calling it washy twaddle—we know quite well that possibly some of our facts may be slightly incorrect, but, as we do not profess to have evolved them out of

our inner consciousness, we have taken those we doubt about, out of books, with the lingering faith (which we still hold) that what is in print must be true, so the fault lies with the books, not with us. We know full well that we were not born masters of English prose, so we will content ourselves with trusting that we may not also have been born masters of English prosiness, and throw ourselves neck and crop on the tender mercies of good and bad sailors, and the last at least will not be cruel!

The world is composed of such—nay, divided by a hard and fast line into lovers, and haters of the sea; only one of us is a lover,—the other is a hater, so we ought to be able to please both parties—let us hope we shall *displease* neither.

It is always best to begin with the *dramatis personæ*; it saves one pages of wading, in order to discover which is which, and who is who. And we are anxious to save our readers trouble, not that we are exactly

anxious to spare *them*, but alas! for the reading public of to-day, the way they get through a book reminds one of a table of weights and measures; it runs somewhat thus:

2 words = 1 page.  
 4 pages = 1 skip.  
 6 skips = 1 vol.  
 2 vols. = 1 yawn.  
 10 yawns = 1 book.

Not that our book is to consist of ten volumes. Heaven forbid! So for our own sakes we will begin as follows:

‘Ariadne’—Goddess beloved by Bacchus, alias schooner yacht of 380 tons.

C. Our Commodore.

F. Our Commander.

M. Wife of F., joint authoress of the following, and one half of the ‘We.’

E. Friend of the preceding, and the other half of the ‘We.’

T. Another friend.

Mr. W. Yet another friend.

Mr. K. Another, and another friend.



Captain, mates, crew, stewards, attendants.

Scene. The deep blue sea.

This first particular scene—Charing Cross Station.

F. and M. arrived as usual about forty minutes too soon, so as to be sure not to be late, and by degrees the rest of the party arrived in driblets; first Mr. W. and his modest portmanteau, then T., happy and cheerful; for were there not still two hours before Folkestone?—then C., and finally E., just as F. began to look anxiously at his watch.

In we all packed, and, though our hearts were not quite as gay as our faces appeared, when we said good-bye to the little knot of friends who had come to see us off, yet we had much to think of and much to do in the two hours, which seem so dreadfully short, before you arrive at that terrible boat.

What *could* induce such bad sailors to

go yachting? Ah! my friends, there are wheels within wheels, reasons behind reasons, and, as it would not interest you to hear them, we will spare you their infliction; but if you could have seen into one corner of M.'s box, and another of T.'s, you would have found bottles of chlorale ready mixed by the dozen, packets of cocaine lozenges bought at the last moment as a forlorn hope, bottles and bottles of Mattei's pillules in a tin box, Eno's Fruit Salt, Pyretic Saline, and what not else, with full directions for their use and application, and then you would have fully realised how hope springs eternal in the human breast!

Our journey to Paris was accomplished with but the trifling incident of two luggage trains having gone off the line ahead of us, which considerably delayed our arrival, but put us to no other inconvenience. We slept there that night, and the following day took the evening mail

to Marseilles, where, to our infinite joy, the Mediterranean for once maintained its totally undeserved reputation, and lay at our feet looking like a transparent liquid sapphire.





## CHAPTER II.

### ALGIERS.

**WE** went straight on board the 'Ville de Naples,' bound for Algiers, and settled ourselves in the most comfortable of cabins, and then sallied forth on deck to enjoy ourselves. There is nothing more amusing, (if you are well,) than to sit on deck and watch your fellow-passengers, and try to make out who and what they are. Half of them were English, and one we speedily recognised as he silently paced up and down meditating on new political combinations and reviewing his last move

in the game, whether with satisfaction or regret he alone could tell.

As the others formed themselves into groups of twos and threes, we caught scraps of their conversation, and could pass them in mental review as they passed and re-passed in front of us. One man was evidently very indignant with a friend who objected to receiving post-cards—‘Thinks it an insult,’ he kept saying; another, whose dress and general appearance seemed to label him ‘horsey,’ walked and talked in unnatural combination with one, every fold of whose garment said ‘business’; a third stalked backwards and forwards more and more energetically as he grew paler and paler (wholly without reason, be it said). Another pair set themselves resolutely down to a game of chess; then presently a young French lady—lately married probably, to judge by the confiding way in which, when darkness fell, she laid her head on her husband’s

shoulder and gazed upwards at the moon—comes lightly tripping forward dressed in a *costume de voyage* (grey cachemire piped with leather), and in a childish, airy way tries to run up the shrouds from inside, and, getting two feet from the ground, comes down again with a graceful jump and a coquettish laugh. But the business men re-pass again, and the post-card reappears with fresh indignation.

‘Such an odd thing to object to receiving a post-card!’—then, ‘Oh, Lady Mary, isn’t this really delicious!’ and T., with a smile on her face, approaches the bench where E. and M. are sitting. A mysterious little packet is handed from one to the other.

‘Ten pillules at once, and then one every half-hour.’ Certainly Mattei is wonderful—when the sea is like a mill-pond.

‘Hark, I hear the dinner bell!’ Joyful thought, for in spite of Leman’s hard biscuit, which it is prudent to keep eating,



we are very hungry, and we rise to our feet. We see the post-card approaching as we gather up our wraps and descend from the upper deck, and, as we pass down the companion, we observe the French lady playing a selection from the 'Grande Duchesse' on the saloon piano with great execution and brilliancy, and, as we sit down to dinner, we observe her with great eagerness, asking the captain if she could be called next morning at four, so as to go and fish! No doubt energy is a virtue, but it may become a vice.

We steamed into Algiers harbour next morning without the sea having heaved one unkind sigh or ruffled its smiling blue surface throughout the thirty-six hours. As we stood on deck, we could see the tall masts of the 'Ariadne' as she lay a little way off, and in a few minutes more the captain came alongside with the steam-launch, and we went on board our little floating home.

Very pretty and cosy she looked, and the suite of cabins looked quite palatial as we went down and examined our abode for the next few months.

On the whole, I think Algiers is a disappointing place, though one can fancy its having attractions to people who live out of the town in the hundreds of villas which dot the side of the hill in all directions.

In spite of the wonderful fascination to European eyes of those tall, kingly-looking Arabs, in their long white bournouses, walking to and fro with slow, dignified steps, and the turbaned Moors with their rich and brilliant combinations of colours, the French have somehow set their indelible stamp on the place, and boulevards with newspaper kiosques, French modistes and slouchy-looking French soldiers, make you fancy yourself in a second-rate miniature Paris. Of course this only applies to the most frequented streets; two or three hundred yards at the back,

the Arab quarter of the town takes you into a different world, where you begin to feel that after all you are in Africa, and not in 'la belle France.'

How impossible it seems to realise that within the memory of man no less than three thousand white slaves were set free by Lord Exmouth when he destroyed the fleet of the Algerine pirates in 1816 !

A slab in the English church records the devotion of an Englishman, Devereux Spratt by name, who, having been carried off into slavery, and in time ransomed by his friends, refused to forsake his fellow-captives, but remained to give them such comfort and consolation as was possible in their miserable condition.

The French landed and took possession of the town in 1830, the immediate cause of the occupation being the insult offered to the French consul by the Dey, who during a dispute which had arisen struck the consul on the face with his fan. Re-

fusing to make an adequate apology, the French made it a *casus belli*, and Algiers, after undergoing a lengthy and ill-sustained siege of three years' duration, fell into their hands. They are not popular masters, and as a nation are disliked by the natives, which is hardly to be wondered at; French officialism is proverbially offensive, how much more so when applied to the naturally proud owners of the soil.

Contrary to our expectations, we positively shivered with cold during the first fortnight of our stay on Afric's sunny shore. It blew, it rained, it poured, and yet, in spite of the streets being one day ankle-deep in grey mud, the next day you were smothered in dust. Nevertheless, as we had to stay there till the storm blew over, we used to go ashore every day and explore the curiosity shops and the sights of the town.

There is not much of interest to see in the way of buildings, and the cathedral is

a poor imitation of Moorish architecture. Except that it contains the body of San Geronimo, there is nothing in it worthy of attention, but the story of this young Arab saint, as given by the Spanish Benedictine monk Hadeo, is worth recording.\* In 1540 he was taken prisoner as a child by the Spaniards, in an expedition made by them against Algiers from Oran. He was baptised and made a Christian. While engaged with the Spaniards in a raid on some neighbouring Arabs, their boat was pursued by Moorish corsairs, and they were taken prisoners to Algiers. Here they tried to force Geronimo to renounce Christianity, but, in spite of their utmost endeavours, he refused to yield to their threats; he was therefore sentenced to be thrown alive into the liquid bed of cement which had been prepared to receive a great block of masonry. His hands and feet were bound, and, still keeping stedfast

\* See Murray's '*Mediterranean.*'

to his resolve, the terrible sentence was put into execution, and he was cast in alive, and his body literally built into the fort. 'We hope,' writes Hadeo, 'that God's grace may one day extricate Geronimo from this place, and reunite his body with those of many other holy martyrs of Christ whose blood and happy deaths have consecrated this country.'

Curiously enough in 1853, when they were demolishing this fort, they came upon the bones of the young martyr in the very spot where Hadeo had described them as having been thrown. The cement had formed a complete mould round his body, and so perfect had it remained that they were able to take a plaster of Paris cast from it, which is now to be seen in the museum.

There is something very touching in the young figure lying on his face with his hands tied behind him, the very shape of the cords being visible, and, though the

features are slightly obliterated, there is an indescribable feeling of reality in the attitude of the upturned chin and head bent back from the cruel bed of concrete which engulfed him. As one looks at it, the simple, unadorned figure brings home to one more than any monument, however beautiful, the constancy and faith of one 'of whom the world was not worthy.'







## CHAPTER III.

### IN THE ARAB QUARTER.



IN general we despised and detested guides, but for once in a way, decided upon engaging one to take us through the Arab quarter, and he, being a very civil man from Cook's office, did us no harm, but on the contrary was of great use. We first hired one of the *voitures de place* drawn by two strong Barb ponies which are plentiful in the streets, and drove by a winding road to the old citadel and palace of the Bey at the top of the town. Of this we could not see much, as lately

the French authorities have stopped all visitors from entering the fort, for fear of their turning out to be German spies in disguise. We flattered ourselves that we did not look Germanic, or suspicious characters; but, no exception being made in our favour, we had to content ourselves with an outside view of the gate, and an interesting bit of the Bey's palace which still remains, a picturesque doorway with a projecting window above it, curiously supported by rafters placed obliquely against the main wall.

We then, passing by the ruins of an old fort, proceeded to walk down the hill through the Arab quarter. This being our first sight of a purely Oriental town, interested us greatly, and it is indeed most curious and picturesque. The streets are nowhere practicable for carts, and in many places so narrow that two laden mules could not pass each other; in some, the occupants of two opposite houses could

easily shake hands out of their respective first-floor windows, if they possessed such things, but one of the peculiarities of these Moorish dwellings is that they have no outside windows worthy of the name. Occasionally one projects, propped upon oblique rafters like that described above, and the over-hanging roofs were often supported in the same manner, which, when they touched and almost overlapped each other at the turns and angles of the streets, had a very singular effect.

The streets are so steep that they consist generally of a series of very broad, shallow, pitch-paved steps, and they are thronged with a motley crowd of Arabs and Kabyles in flowing bournouse and turbans, brown-striped cloaks and hoods, or gay jackets and fez caps, little bare-legged boys, who, nevertheless, kept their heads and bodies enveloped in white or sackcloth drapery, and women swathed in snowy garments, looking like walking pillows as they shambled

awkwardly along, only their dark eyes visible.

On our expressing a wish to see the interior of one of the houses, the guide said that the ladies could certainly do so, but that the gentlemen could not. E., who is of opinion that the male half of humanity has in every respect the advantage over that to which she unfortunately belongs, was forced to confess that there are exceptions to every rule, as she and M. unceremoniously opened and entered the door pointed out by the guide, and left F. and Mr. W. lamenting in the street.

A dark passage or entry conducted us to another door, and this again into a court or quadrangle with a gallery built round it. Here were several women who gave us a smiling welcome, and, though unable to speak French, could to a certain extent understand that language. On comprehending our wishes, they most readily proceeded to show us their house.

A very narrow staircase in the wall led up to the gallery on which the living-rooms opened. These rooms were of an oblong shape, one end being filled up by the bed, placed across it, and in every case covered with very white sheets and counterpanes. A divan ran round the walls of the apartments, mattings and rugs covered the floors, and a large, gilt-framed French mirror, with a few common coloured prints, completed the furniture; while the little rooms, having no windows, received light and air only from the roofless court into which the doors opened. In one, a young woman was sitting cross-legged on the floor, (there being no chairs), making a deep silk fringe, and was the possessor of a sewing-machine, which she pointed out with great pride.

The women appeared to be of the middle industrial class, not poor, for it was with difficulty they could be induced to accept a little present 'for the children' (who,

by-the-by, swarmed); certainly they were not beautiful, and were plentifully tattooed over the forehead, chin, and hands, but were all very courteous and very good-humoured.

As we were taking our leave they recalled us, exclaiming, ‘Marabout! marabout!’ and led us into a little room on the ground-floor, where a Mahommedan saint (or marabout) lay in a stone coffin above ground, on the spot where he died. It was all hung with rich-coloured stuffs, and on the coffin lay odd little votive offerings, wax tapers ready for lighting and incense. We could not quite make out whether the inhabitants of this dwelling all belonged to one family, but suppose they did; if so, it was indeed a numerous one!

Having rejoined our deserted and disconsolate companions, we continued our descent until we reached the Frenchified Algiers we all disliked; but, before re-

turning on board, were beguiled into a native curiosity-shop, where we were much tempted, and squandered some of our spare cash. It was interesting, from being a regular Moorish house, not unlike the one just described, but with every tiny room piled up with lace, stuffs, brass-work, etc.

On Sunday afternoon one of our party went to witness a singular ceremony at the Church of Notre Dame d'Afrique, which he described as occupying a commanding position almost overhanging the sea, and which is approached by a road leaving the west side of Algiers by the gate Bab-el-Oued, ascending at the last by somewhat steep zig-zags.

There is a monastery attached to this church of a Carmelite order peculiar to Algiers, the monks wearing beards, and a habit resembling the Arab bournouse, and there is also an orphanage connected with the establishment.



A portion of the ceremony consisted of a procession which filed out of the church on to a platform overlooking the sea. A black pall was carried by four boys in scarlet cassocks, and a monk, having explained the object of the service in French, the choir sang the Psalms for the dead, and a priest, in a black cope, recited the funeral prayers for all sailors, fishermen, and travellers who had been drowned in the Mediterranean. The choir and clergy returned into the church singing the *De Profundis*, and Mr. W. described the whole ceremony as extremely solemn and touching, and we regretted not having seen it.





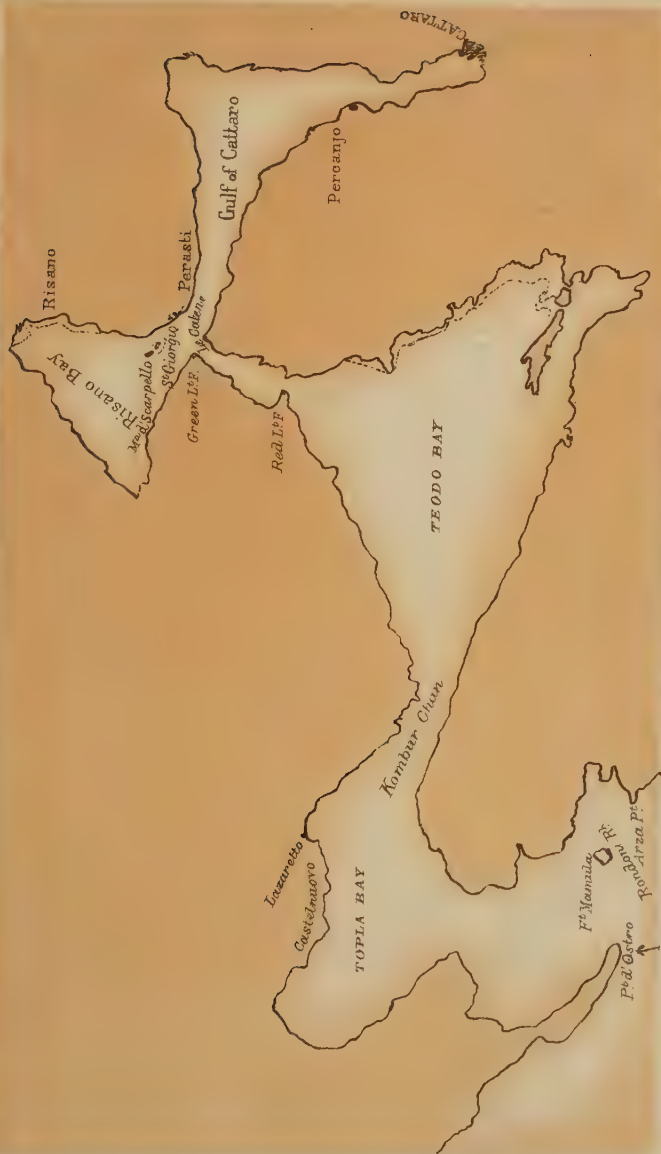
## CHAPTER IV.

### CAST AWAY.



WE were not sorry when the time came to leave Algiers, and, having determined to stop at Bougie (Boujiah) and see the famous Chabet Pass of which we had heard so much, we weighed anchor, set sail, and away.

About six that evening we passed Cape Buguet, which is forty miles from Cape Matafou, a headland six or seven miles from Algiers. The whole line of coast is very mountainous, and appears to be extremely barren and uninhabited; but the



MAP SHOWING ROUTE OF 'ARIADNE'.



view of the snow mountains in the background was beautiful, and some of the nearer hills are very lofty and picturesque in their outline.

We had a head wind most of the way, and sometimes none at all, but as it seems a matter of indifference to 'Ariadne' which way the wind blows, or, indeed, whether it blows at all, we got to our destination somehow, and anchored in the open bay about four in the afternoon of the day following that of our departure from Algiers.

Bougie is a most picturesque little town, situated on a rocky promontory at the head of the bay, the houses rising in tiers one above the other, and crowned with the old citadel, restored by the Spaniards, whose long lines of unbroken architecture stand out boldly against the magnificent background of snow-clad mountains. There is no harbour worthy of the name, but the beautiful bay stretches away to the north-

east till the mountains which hem it in are lost in the misty blue distance of the horizon.

We had a great discussion as to how to manage the expedition to the Chabet Pass. To sleep there seemed impossible; to do it in one day almost equally so, but at last a suggestion was made which apparently met all difficulties. The yacht would land us on the other side of the bay about twenty-five kilos from Bougie, and a carriage sent there over night would meet us at a spot near the Administrateur's house, where a sandy beach seemed to hold out a possibility of landing in the gig. So far so well. About six o'clock on a grey misty morning we set sail, skimmed gently across the bay to our destination, and, getting into the gig, were rowed ashore. The Bougie boatman kept assuring us that if any sea rose it would be impossible to land or re-embark, but the sea looked quiet and calm, and we heeded him not.

We had a strip of heavy sand to walk across, and then a steep, rocky bank to climb, before we reached the carriage, and by the time we got there C. was so tired, we began to be afraid the expedition would be too fatiguing for her. We inquired how long it would take; seven hours at least, said the Administrateur, and the captain begged us not to be late, but to return before dark. We were most anxious for C. to accompany us, but, in view of all this, prudence prevailed, and she decided to stay behind; we were thankful afterwards that she did so.

Later in the year, the drive must be very pretty, as much of the undergrowth consists of oleander and other flowering shrubs, but a few irises and a little Mediterranean heath were the only flowers now visible.

We passed a small ostrich farm, unusual in this part of Africa, and the birds looked poor and unhealthy. Nevertheless, we



were afterwards told that one of them had nearly made an end of its keeper; he had annoyed it in some way, and the ostrich struck out with its powerful feet so violently against the man's chest and injured him so severely that he was still lying in an almost hopeless condition.

After about an hour's drive, the road turns inland up a valley, which, growing narrower and narrower, gradually culminates in the celebrated pass of Chabet-el-Akra, which was our destination, and up which we drove for some distance. It is a gorge so narrow that the wild little torrent which rushes down it and the magnificent road which it took the French seven years to construct, completely fill it, while on either hand the cliffs rise to a great height, and are backed by a range of rugged mountains, many of them covered with snow. These cliffs in many places are quite precipitous; they would not afford footing for a chamois, much less

a goat, and certainly the road is a wonderful work, and does great credit to French engineering skill.

It is about seventeen kilos long, but time would not allow of our going to the end; so, turning round, we put up the horses to bait at a small auberge at the entrance of the pass, down which F. and Mr. W. walked, photographing *en route*. M. took some sketches, and the rest of us walked about picking myrtle and Mediterranean heath, and rested under the cork trees till our horses were ready for another start. We saw quantities of large vultures soaring high above the mountains, and gave them credit for being eagles, but were undeceived by some prosaic Frenchman.

The road was very unfrequented; and to pass some points we had to drive to the extreme verge of the precipice. Except the diligence, I do not think we met another wheeled vehicle,

and the only travellers were a few Kabyles on foot or on horseback, all looking very poor and sickly. We passed a few little farms standing among groves of orange-trees, with herds of very small cattle and lean goats, but generally the country appeared to be sparsely inhabited, and not much cultivated.

We had arranged to be back at Cape Okas before dark, and arrived on the strand punctually to our time, but, alas! a heavy surf had arisen, and, although the gig and dingey were dancing about within hail, we saw at once that there would be a difficulty in beaching them.

After several failures, the dingey, with half-a-dozen men in her, made a last and successful attempt, but these assured us it was scarcely possible to take us off, though they might manage to get away again themselves. We were obliged to come to the same conclusion, and charged with messages to C., begging her to meet

us at Bougie (where we had had no intention of returning), they attempted to launch the little boat, which was promptly swamped, and had to be hauled up again and turned over to rid her of the water. The second trial met with better success, and once out of the breakers they were all right, though very wet, and we poor disconsolate castaways watched the two boats rejoin 'Ariadne,' where our hearts were and our bodies would fain have been.

Here was a predicament! The only houses near, were those of Monsieur C., the Administrateur of the Commune, and, a mile or two off, a miserable little pot-house, where our horses had by this time gone to put up for the night. For ourselves there was no lodging to be got, and we were rather depressed in our spirits, particularly as we were beginning to feel that some dinner would be very acceptable, but knew not where it was to come from. Fortunately we found very kind friends

in Monsieur and Madame C., who, when they discovered our plight, asked us into their house, warmed us by a blazing fire of logs, and finally gave us an excellent dinner.

Our host, a cheery, hospitable Breton gentleman, told us that he ruled absolutely over thirty-five thousand Kabyles, with power to inflict punishment to the amount of five days' imprisonment or fifteen francs fine on his own responsibility, serious cases of crime being sent to Algiers for trial. He has no European to assist nor soldiers to protect him, his staff consisting only of five mounted Kabyles in Government pay, yet he is held entirely responsible for the law, order, and finances of the great district under his charge. This is composed of twelve divisions, each under a native chief who is responsible to Monsieur C., while each village has its head man, who is bound to keep the chief of the division in which

it is situated acquainted with all that takes place in it. Should any rising occur in the Commune, it appeared to us that the position of the C.'s would be a very precarious one; but Monsieur C. gave the Kabyles a most excellent character for docility, and said that they gave him little or no trouble. They occasionally quarrel among themselves, but to strangers are invariably courteous and helpful, and as hospitable as their means will allow, though, he said, those on the coast were very poor, and a prey to fever and ague. Farther inland they are healthier and also better off.

We were waited on at dinner by a tall, handsome young Kabyle in a snow-white turban and rich dress, drolly set off by a kitchen-maid's blue apron which he had tied round his waist. While we were being thus rested and refreshed, communications were being opened with the driver of our carriage at the post-house, which,

to our intense relief, resulted in its arrival at Monsieur C.'s door at about 10.30, though it went to our hearts to ask our poor little horses, who had done fifty good miles that day, to drag us another weary distance of twenty-five kilos, and nothing but necessity would have induced us to do so.

Extract from the Log of the 'Ariadne'.—  
'I fear I can hardly find fitting words to describe our drive back to Bougie, which is the part of the expedition entrusted to my pen. First of all it was pitch dark, and therefore no view to describe; secondly, we were all of us very tired, and therefore tried to sleep; and thirdly, because the carriage was shut, or rather the roof was shut, for neither of the windows nor one of the doors would close, and we passed most of the night in a thorough draught, the strength and cold of which no words can describe. E. had neuralgia, M. had a bad cold, and by all proper rules we should

and ought to have had confirmed tic-douloureux and bronchitis; but, so much for homœopathic remedies, we were both much benefited by the change and fresh air.

‘ But I must return to my narrative, and take up the thread of the history of that memorable night at the moment when T. discerned the joyful sound of the horses’ bells.

‘ Joyful ! What a mockery is in that word ! At half-past ten the miserable little animals drove up, and we all got into the carriage and *tried* to leave our kind and hospitable host. We bowed and smiled, and waved farewell, but we did *not* disappear from sight ; the wretched horses could not and would not move. Whack ! went the whip on their poor thin backs. Again we smiled good-bye, thinking this *must* be final. Not an inch did we stir ; and oh ! what an opportunity for an agent of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty



to Animals! They whacked and they whipped, and finally they turned the wheels by main force, and at last off they set at a canter, and such was our relief that the poor little animals moved at all, that we forgot to wave a final farewell, and in a minute our carriage, with its closely packed contents, was lost from sight in the murky darkness.

‘The drive was wholly without incident, except for an occasional slight dispute between E. and Mr. W. as to whose turn it was to hold the door. It was too dark to distinguish objects by the side of the road, but, as we drove along by the beach, the crest of each wave as it broke on the shore was illuminated by a long line of brilliant phosphorescence, which threw a strange, weird light over the sea.

‘On the other side, too, we passed a curious and singularly picturesque scene. It was an Arab encampment; they had lighted a huge fire under the shelter of a

rock, and the Arabs with their horses were crowding round it, the light of the fire casting a lurid glare on the faces of the men and their weary little steeds, which stood with drooping heads beside them.

‘The country swarms thereabouts with wild boar, but we saw none seeking its nightly repast. Panthers of a huge description frequent these lonely forests, but none took their nocturnal rambles in our direction. Hares and rabbits abound, but their unerring instinct told them that the framers of the Hares and Rabbits’ Bill were about, and they kept at home. The only living creature of whose presence we were made aware was the homely frog, who made its harsh voice tremble on the midnight air.

‘Bougie was twenty-five kilos from Cape Okas, but we went on so long that at last it seemed as if there were no reason we should ever stop; however somewhere between twelve and one we did so, in a dirty little

street, in front of a dirty little house, with a piercing north-east wind cutting us in two. A head looked out of the window; we addressed it, and demanded entrance. After a few minutes the sleepest waiter we ever saw came down and opened the door. How he must have hated us ! Our hearts failed us as we crossed the threshold of that dwelling. The "Dweller on that Threshold,"\* was it fleas or was it . . . ?

‘These are moments which shorten the strongest lives !

‘We followed our guide up flight after flight; we stood stupidly round him as he fumbled for keys, then up again higher and higher, our hearts sinking lower and lower, till at last he threw open a door, and oh ! joy unspeakable, behold two nice little beds, clean, and, moreover, one of them iron, and more rooms ditto, and so to bed, says sleepy head. It is true we went to bed supper-

\* See Bulwer's ‘Zanoni.’

less, except for the poor comfort of a little chilly soda-water, and we had no clothes but those we had on; but beggars cannot be choosers, and the beds were well aired (I had crumbs in mine), and we had a roof to our heads, and we soon forgot our woes in sleep.'

The next morning our first impulse was to look out for the yacht. Not a vestige of her to be seen—not even a white speck on the horizon, and we felt somewhat low in consequence. The prospect of spending even a few days at Bougie was not encouraging, and our spirits had sunk considerably since the previous evening. Half a bad night hardly refreshes one, and a long delay in bringing breakfast made us feel depressed and peevish, as if this were the last straw on the camel's back. E., T., and Mr. W. had taken a long walk before breakfast, and came back looking faint and famished. The morning dragged

slowly on; the wind was blowing hard, and we began to think that the 'Ariadne' had gone off to Philippeville, and left us to find our way there as best we could.

At last, far away in the distance, a sail was seen, and to our great joy it proved to be the yacht making long tacks first this way, then that, as she beat up against the wind, but coming slowly and surely towards us. We went down to the port to be ready to put off the moment the boat came for us. How long that hour seemed! The yacht always appeared to make a long tack, just as it was getting near, and the waves were breaking and dashing over the pier in a manner which looked anything but promising for our row in the cutter.

At last the boat came alongside, but we nearly stamped with impatience when we found the steward had come with it and wanted provisions. We had to wait, and very cold and wretched it was watching

the waves get higher and higher, and the yacht which had run close in sail away again, as if she were tired of waiting.

Finally we all got in and started. M. wished particularly to describe this herself, feeling sure that if E. had had the doing of it she would have written thus: 'After a pleasant half-hour dancing over the waves we came alongside of the yacht and went on board.'

The reality was far otherwise. We seemed at one moment to be hovering like a seagull mountains high on the crest of a wave, the next plunging head foremost into a gulf. The sea broke against the sides of the boat with a heavy thud, then again the bows were lifted quite out of the water and came down with a splash, and while you were well down in the trough of the sea, and a wave was apparently going to swallow you up with one gulp, up you rose again just as you thought there could not possibly be time

to reach the top ; and so on *da capo*. And this is what is called pleasure !

This horrible see-saw went on for what seemed a very long time, while those on board the yacht tried in vain to catch sight of us. At last they descried the boat on the top of a wave, and in a few minutes more 'Ariadne' came flying down on us like a bird on the wing.

It was no easy matter getting on board with such a swell, and poor T. had a narrow escape of breaking her leg. It being impossible to lower the accommodation ladder, they dragged us up by the hanging steps, and, as she put her foot on them, they swung out and then back against the side, with her foot between. It was not until afterwards we found out how much it had hurt her, for she said not a word, though it was a severe wrench, and for some days was very painful.

But we were safe on board, to C.'s great relief, who had been anxiously watching us from the deck, and in a few minutes

more we were flying before the wind on our way to Philippeville.

Over the next two days we will draw a veil. It is over,—and, strange to say, we are yet alive, and that is sufficient. It is still stranger to say that C. and E. describe it as a capital run !







## CHAPTER V.

### PHILIPPEVILLE AND CONSTANTINE.



OUR reasons for stopping at Philippeville were not because of any particular beauty or interest attached to the place itself, but because it is the nearest point from which we could make an expedition to Constantine.

It is a modern French seaport, with, however, some interesting Roman remains, and an amphitheatre in tolerable preservation. The town is not even pretty, but there is an excellent harbour, and we stayed several days there for the prosaic

reason of 'washing,' and, as I said before, in order to see Constantine, to which place a railway takes you in four or five hours.

The first day of our stay we took a drive through the town into the country beyond. After the incessant cold winds and rainy weather we had been having ever since arriving in Algiers, the sight of the sun was very cheering and pleasant, and the country looked so well cultivated and fertile that we were disposed to think better of Philippeville than we had at first anticipated.

Our driver had his own decided views as to where he should take us, and we humbly acquiesced. After going for some distance between formidable hedges of prickly pear, which formed most effectual barriers between field and field, we came to the entrance of a *parc anglais*, and, our coachman driving in without hesitation, we found ourselves in a shady wood of eucalyptus trees, the road winding along

the banks of the Oued Saf-Saf, a trout stream, which, however, seemed too muddy to lead one to expect much from the trout. The cool shade of the woods was most refreshing after our hot drive, and we looked with delight from side to side as we drove slowly up the hill. A dwarf iris of a brilliant blue gave colour to the somewhat dusky green of the eucalyptus, and little patches of scarlet geranium as we went further on seemed to bring us suddenly into sunshine and summer.

At length the driver stopped his horse, and said he could go no further, and that we must get out of the carriage if we wished to see the house. We hardly thought it worth while, but curiosity prevailed, and we walked on, and stepped, as it were, into a fairy-story. To our surprise, we emerged on a gravel plateau or terrace, with a broad flight of stone steps leading down to a garden at the foot, bright with flowers, tall palm trees, euca-

lyptus, and various shrubs framed in with the purple hills on the one side and the intense blue of the sea on the other.

Facing this terrace was the house, the door of which stood open under the broad cool arcades which ran along the outside, and on the threshold stood a tall, gorgeously dressed Moor, with his white turban and brilliant coloured garments, inviting us to enter the enchanted palace. Such it seemed to us, as we walked into a large, richly decorated hall with costly Persian carpets, a collection of silver plate laid out on one table, books on another, and then beyond that again into other reception rooms, all prepared as if for the enchanted princess. One half expected to hear distant strains of music, and to see from behind a heavy curtain a mysterious veiled form appear and conduct us to a sumptuous repast served by silent, fairy-like attendants.

This alone was wanting to complete the

picture, and, as we came out again on to the terrace, we might have fancied the prince was only in disguise, for there, close behind us, were two huge lions in a great cage open to the air. Our gorgeous Moor opened the doors and went into them, much to our anxiety; but they seemed to be well under control, and took little heed of him; when however his wife came by, in her silk and gold costume, with her heavy gold ornaments, the young lioness rose at once and slunk away, and, on our inquiring the reason, we were told that she administered chastisement to them with her slipper!

The larger one had been caught only about twenty miles off, but unluckily had been wounded in the leg during its capture, and limped in consequence; the lioness was bred in captivity. Its mother met with a tragic end. Having eaten with impunity several foolish little dogs who approached too near the bars of the cage, she thought she would do the same by a

shrewd old pussy cat. The cat was caught, but, in going down the capacious throat of the lioness, she struck out and clawed to such purpose that the lioness was strangled in the effort to swallow its victim !

As we looked at the lions, a silly little terrier kept going within an inch of danger, and, by the eager way in which they followed its every movement with their fierce hungry eyes, we felt that—history repeats itself.

After wandering about the garden for some time, we left the enchanted palace, and drove back to the town, much pleased with our glimpse into fairyland. The owner of the place is a certain Monsieur de Landau, who, having made a large fortune in France, has transformed what must have been a bare, uninteresting piece of ground into a truly delightful spot.

We were desirous of seeing the old town of Constantine, but not caring to sleep there, if we could help it, we heroic-

ally resolved upon turning out at 4.30 a.m., in order to go thither by the six o'clock train. The stars were shining brightly as our party landed at the quay and walked up to the station, where we had a long wait, but at last started, and the train, made up of old 'Paris, Lyons, and Mediterranean Railway' carriages, and, we should think, a still older engine, crawled slowly off, stopping again at Saf-Saf, and again at short intervals but for long periods, at various little stations with no apparent object, as there was scarcely a dwelling to be seen. Probably the engine required these stoppages in order to recover its breath, the line being on a steep gradient for nearly the whole distance, and it was scarcely fair to ask the veteran to drag us up such an incline.

Constantine is fifty-four miles from Philippeville, and the journey takes exactly four hours. In the distance there were ranges of fine mountains, the home

of the Saf-Saf lions, and we found ourselves looking out of window in the vain hope that curiosity might have brought a stray king of beasts to inspect the noisy, smoky monster in whose interior we were being shaken to bits; but no wild animals of any kind were to be seen, and only a few poor looking sheep and goats, while the country traversed by the railway is singularly barren and uninteresting, producing apparently nothing but wild artichokes and asphodel; so, as soon as the sun had risen (which he did in a very tame and disappointing fashion), we were glad to betake ourselves to our books, and read diligently till we were close to our destination, when a very magnificent view suddenly broke upon us.

Constantine is built upon a kind of rocky island in the middle of the desert, which stands up four square to the points of the compass, and is surrounded by gorges of very great depth; one of these



the railway crosses, and, as it is backed by fine mountains, the first impression one receives of the place is very striking. It was but a glimpse, and then the train burrowed through a long tunnel, at the end of which was the station, and, while we are driving to the hotel in the stuffiest of omnibuses, we will jot down a few historical particulars respecting Constantine for the benefit of those of our readers who have not studied their Murray.

Under the name of Cirta, this town was the capital of the Numidian kingdom under Massinissa and Jugurtha. The latter defeated Adherbal in its vicinity, and took the town B.C. 114, but was himself defeated by Marius in a second battle of Cirta B.C. 107. It was colonised under Julius Cæsar by Sittius, who re-named it Cirta Sittianorum. Afterwards partially destroyed, it was re-built A.D. 311 by the Emperor Constantine, by whose name it has since been designated.

For many years it was under Tunisian domination, but fell into the hands of the Algerines in 1520. When first attacked by the French under General Clausel in 1836, it offered a successful resistance, but was captured in the following year by General Damrémont, and is now the capital of a province of the same name which contains 1,300,000 inhabitants, and comprises the ancient kingdom of Numidia.

We had dim recollections of having partaken of a meal called breakfast before leaving the yacht, but these were so vague that we 'concluded' to ignore them, and have *déjeûner* at the hotel, after which we chartered a fly with a pair of skinny, weak-looking little Arab horses, who belied their appearance by going fast and well, and drove down a steep and winding road to inspect the gorge.

Leaving the carriage, we walked along a footpath, having on our right a perpendicular wall of rock some hundreds of feet

high, from the top of which the white houses of the town looked down on us, built, as in many cases they are, almost flush with the cliff, while on our left the ground continued to fall away very steeply and to a great depth. After walking for about a quarter-of-a-mile, we arrived at one of the angles of the plateau, the wall of rock trending sharply to the right, and faced by an equally high and precipitous cliff, forming a very deep and splendid gorge, down which a wide but shallow river dashed, and fell almost perpendicularly into the ravine below our feet.

But the most striking feature of this remarkable place is the great natural arch which bridges over the gorge, at a height from the level of the river of at least three hundred feet. It consists of a mass of rock certainly not less than two hundred feet in breadth, and is of an immense span. It forms a most perfect arch, and, looking at it from the rocky edge of





the stream up which we had scrambled, one felt very small and insignificant in the presence of this wonderful work of nature.

Leaving M. to sketch, the rest of us walked a little distance further to see the hot springs, which, the guide told us, are much frequented by bathers in the summer, and are screened and divided off into large and small baths. The water contains both iron and sulphur, and is beautifully clear, the temperature being about 90° Fahrenheit. Some of these baths are in little caves in the cliff, and not much larger than an ordinary tub. One is a Holy Well, and, curiously enough, is considered so by both Arabs and Jews, who leave votive offerings there and burn incense, of which we saw traces.

After returning up the hill into the town, we dismissed our fly, and took a walk through the streets; but, unluckily, it had now come on to rain, and we therefore were unable to see nearly as much of

the Arab town as we should have liked.

The French quarter is—of course—thoroughly French, and therefore uninteresting, but the Arab quarter is most picturesque, and we wandered for some time in and out of the queer little shops with their turbaned occupants, grave, courteous, and most anxious to understand and answer our questions, but never bothering us to buy. One street was entirely given up to the workers in leather, and we saw them making slippers, embroidering leather in gold for harness, etc.; in another lived the workers in brass, in another the bournouse-makers, and here we were much interested by watching the quickness and skill with which the men embroidered these garments in beautiful patterns of silk with elaborate stitches, often holding the skeins of silk for winding and other purposes between their toes.

The pelting rain, and mud inches thick, at last drove us back to the hotel to get

ourselves dried and warm ourselves by a nice little fire ; nor did we object to a cup of tea and some bread and butter before starting on our return, particularly as, to our astonishment and delight, the butter tasted *of* butter, and nothing else.

I think we shall all remember our last view of the great gorge of Constantine as the train emerged from the tunnel. The rain had stopped, but a mist hung over it and over the great mountains in the background through which the level sun was shining, giving to the whole a singularly wild and beautiful effect, which it would have puzzled an artist to reproduce, but which is photographed on our mind's eye.

Our journey back was not much more rapid than that of the morning, and darkness came on long before our arrival at Philippeville. We were not on board much before eight o'clock, and I think we were none of us sorry to betake ourselves to our berths at an unusually early hour.



The day had been a most interesting and enjoyable one, but the cold and wet were annoying, and not what one felt one had a right to expect in the interior of Africa.

It would be well worth one's while, if possible, to spend a few days at Constantine, where there must be much to see, and which is, we should think, quite unique as regards its magnificent position ; it must have been almost impregnable before the days of heavy artillery, but now, of course, could easily be shelled from some of the surrounding heights.





## CHAPTER VI.

### COASTING TO CARTHAGE.



**A**FTER remaining two days longer at Philippeville, we felt that we had pretty nearly exhausted its resources, and therefore set sail for Bona.

As usual, we had a head wind, and tacked repeatedly, once under Cape Ferro, a fine promontory with a great pointed rock on one side of it and a lighthouse. The sunset at sea was very fine, the sky astern of the yacht and behind Cape Bugoroni turning blood-red, and afterwards melting into most delicate tints.

The baby moon, with the old moon in her arms, was lovely, and Venus, close by, looked like a little moon herself, so big and bright was she.

Bona was the ancient Hippo Regius, one of the royal cities of Numidia, and is especially interesting as being the scene of St. Augustine's bishopric, and the place where he wrote his 'Confessions' and other works. He died there during the siege of the town by the Vandals A.D. 428, and his body now lies in the monastery of Hippo, having been brought from Sicily, to which country it had been removed. There is an insignificant monument erected to his memory, but it is devoid of beauty, and has not even an inscription to record its object.

The dress of the children at Bona is exceedingly pretty and picturesque, though difficult to describe; but as they ran about the streets they looked like tulips in their bright coloured petticoats, white sleeves,

and little crossed bodices. The women we saw in the streets were all of them enveloped from head to foot in light blue yashmaks or cloaks, which allowed nothing but their eyes to remain uncovered.

We only remained a few hours at Bona, and left the same evening with a fair wind for Tunis. Before going, we had just time to make an outline of the picturesque town and buildings. The monastery of Hippo stood out in deep purple shadow, clear cut against the sunset sky, while the tall masts and shipping broke the long line of breakwater and low-lying ground between the hill on which it stands and the opposite side, where the houses cluster round the bay and climb the steep hill beyond.

It was a most lovely evening, and, as we moved gently out of the harbour with only just enough breeze to fill the sails and glide slowly out to sea, the stars came out one by one in the evening glow, and

as that faded into night the whole heavens grew bright with stars, Venus with her pure, stedfast light, Orion brilliant with his glittering diamond sword and belt, and the old Bear twinkling away, with his bright eyes looking down upon us from a so much greater height than usual that one hardly recognised his familiar form.

Nights such as these and the days which succeeded them make up for a great deal, and as we glided over a lovely tranquil sea without a ripple, and a soft little air carried us along, even M. was fain to acknowledge that yachting may at times be truly a delight.

During the next two days we slipped along, hardly perceiving that we moved, and indeed occasionally, when the wind dropped, we had to throw pieces of paper overboard to see if we were making progress, and welcomed with joy the little bubbling noise made by the ship going through the water as the sails again

filled and we moved forward once more.

Alas! what is joy to one, is death to another. At this time many happy turtles who had hitherto passed their days in blissful ignorance of what a delicacy their callypash and callypee is to that omnivorous fish and flesh-eating monster man, looked their last at the sun. 'A turtle! a turtle!' rang out like a war-cry one morning on deck, and quick as thought the dingey was lowered, and the captain, who was singularly expert in their capture, rolling up his shirt-sleeves, sprang into the boat.

Far away on the surface of the water, a little black head rose in the air, and the happy turtle lay basking in the rays of the sun, thinking perhaps of its turtleines at home, and wondering in its misty, turtle like mind what nice, innocent, and tasty morsel would float into its ready beak (for turtles have beaks, not mouths), and then a little paddling sound seemed

to mix with its pleasant dreams, and a gentle ripple made it rise and fall with a soothing motion on the bosom of the sea. Ah! what is that? A sudden vision of the fierce face of man, seen once and too late, glaring down over the side of the boat, and, before the poor turtle had time to breathe or plunge below, her pet hind fin was seized with a grasp of iron, she was swung wildly into the air, and in another minute lay gasping on her back at the bottom of the boat, and the captain returned proud and elate with his prostrate prey.

And so the turtle passes out of the story, —as the sagas say. Not quite yet, though, for ghostly visions of a gaunt, unwieldy form, sitting on end with the tears rolling down its furrowed cheeks, seem to rise before us, and we hear a sobbing sigh breathe out the words, ‘I was a *real* turtle once,’ as a large piece of delicious cally-pash passes from the soup plate into our

mouths. Ditto, ditto with several others, and turtle-soup became a common occurrence in our bill-of-fare.

It is wonderful how quickly human nature learns to correspond with its environment. I do not mean to say that during this time our fingers and toes began to move less independently, and grow together in a fin-like manner, nor yet that poor M. corresponded with as much facility to the motion of the ship as she could have desired; but our minds surely descended to a lower level, and that I understand is the first sign.

Our bookshelves bristled with books of reference and instruction; Bouillé's fat sides were squeezed between Smith's 'Dictionary of Classics'; the 'Odyssey' was kept from wandering by the 'Military Orders of Christendom,' and Carlyle's 'French Revolution,' which lay at rest on a shelf; Murray's red face, Smith's 'Mediterranean,' and Webster's Dictionary stood at attention



round the main cabin, but what was our literature and what were our occupations?

We used to think that on a yacht we should have time to improve our minds. Vain delusion! No sooner did one sit down to read, than some frivolous person would shout down the companion, 'Come quick, there is a most extraordinary bird,' or there is a flying fish, or a nautilus, or a something; and up one flew, afraid of being the only one not to see it, and when you reached the spot and brought up your glasses, 'Oh, it's gone now,' would reward your labours. Or again a steamer would come in sight—as if one had never seen a steamer before,—or an odd light in the sky, or a stupid little island—anything sufficed to fetch one up; and these are the things which form the events of one's day. We used to read aloud a great deal, but always novels, and indignation with Mr. Slope, wonder at Mrs. Proudie, and pity for Mrs. Quiverful were our politics.

Such is life at sea, but when we reach a port where letters come on board, then again we return to ourselves, and feel a happy stir in our hearts, and once more recognise that turtle-like placidity is not the highest state to which we are capable of rising. Only those who are away from home and out of reach of news know how delightful letters can be, and the horrible blank that comes over one when others get them and you are left out. M., for one, thinks she has made a resolution to be a better correspondent in future—may it last! Certainly King Solomon was right when he said, ‘As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.’

About six o'clock the day we left Bona. We passed Tabasca—an old fortified town which at one time belonged to the Genoese, and was ceded to the French in 1830 by the Bey of Tunis. We could see the citadel gleaming white in the evening light, and an hour or so afterwards we

tacked under the lofty height of Cape Serratt. After repeatedly going about, we made a long leg out, to get to windward of the Galitas: but these were still in sight, though far under our stern, next morning, and we were close to the two curious isolated rocks which go by the name of the Fratelli. A pleasant breeze now arose, and for some hours we had a charming sail.

But we had for some time observed a bank of white mist lying low over the land and right ahead of us, with all the appearance of a Channel sea fog, and soon after four we sailed into a belt of it, then again into a perfectly clear open space, to be replunged in a few minutes into the dense and impenetrable vapour. The effect was curious, and, as the sun set in a moment of comparative clearness, its rays illuminated the rocky little island and Lighthouse of Cane which appeared to be floating in mist.

Shortly after, a brisk land breeze rising, disposed of the fog, and sent us along to such purpose that by 8.30 next morning we let go our anchor in the port of Goletta. This is an open roadstead which runs in very shallow, so that our berth was quite a mile-and-a-half from the landing place. It is separated from Tunis by a salt-water lake about five miles wide, which can be entered by a canal, and is so completely exposed that the yacht rolled considerably at her moorings, and waterproofs were required in the boat going ashore and returning on board.

We lost no time in landing and taking the train for Tunis by the little railway which makes a circuit of about fifteen miles and takes thirty-five minutes to do the distance. It passes along the inner side of the promontory, on which some remains of Carthage are still to be seen, and the series of pictures that followed one another in slow succession as the train crept out of

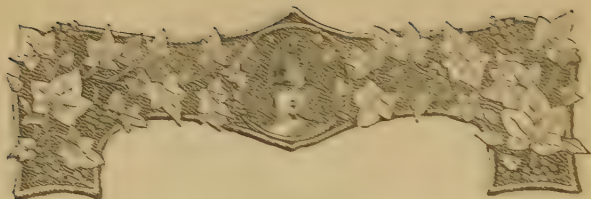
the station remain fixed in one's memory with an indelible impression.

First the soft, furry young camel tethered near an equally youthful donkey in a brilliant patch of green, between flat-roofed houses with glimpses of blue sea beyond. Then the station of St. Louis close to the chapel built by the French in memory of their crusader king, near which bits of old masonry crop up in all directions out of the ground, and serve less to show the ruins of the great city of Carthage than to illustrate the truth of the words, 'Delenda est Carthago.'

Then the train, which takes a long *détour* so as to go to Marsa, where is the Bey's country palace, returns on its steps and runs between the low marshy plain which separates Goletta from Tunis and the Bahira salt-water lake on the left. This has but little beauty in itself, but in that magic light of a pure, transparent atmosphere, the mountains had a blue,

ethereal look and their craggy summits rose boldly into the sky, while at their feet lay the lake in soft grey beauty, with its island fortress standing out against the hills, the rippling waves coming close up to your feet, and in the foreground on the half sandy, half rocky shore stood an Arab shepherd with his flock of sheep giving life to the scene. On the right hand side lay the plain bounded by low hills, with the sun on its olive green herbage, and the storks flying with their long legs stretched out behind them, and further away towards the sea the white houses of Goletta glistening in the sun like a pearl set in an opal sea.

The railway was originally made by an English company, and bought by Rubettino for £165,000, greatly to the annoyance of the French, who resolved to possess themselves of it, but were cleverly outwitted by the Italians, who now work it.



## CHAPTER VII.

### TUNIS.



THE first sight of Tunis is disappointing, as the railway lands one in a suburb already converted by the French into a bare sort of boulevard lined with cafés and restaurants, but ten minutes' drive brought us to the entrance to the bazaars, and then—hey, presto!—we found ourselves in the land of Haroun-al-Raschid!

To us, who had never seen anything of so purely an Oriental character, these bazaars proved an endless source of delight and interest, and indeed we were

told that they were equal, if not superior, in interest to those of Constantinople, and ran those of Smyrna hard.

They form a network of narrow streets, some of which are arched in with stone and others roofed with wooden boards; the shops are raised some feet above the roadway, and are often divided one from the other by gaily painted pillars; they are very small, and so crowded with wares that the proprietor can often only get in by a complicated manœuvre executed on his hands and knees—a feat which we saw performed by a magnificent and dignified Arab in the Souk-el-Attarine (Bazaar of Essences), who then, with an air of condescension, proceeded to measure us out some attar of roses, for which he accepted one third of his original demand.

*Apropos* of this man, whose beautiful hands and generally high-bred appearance were remarkable, we were interested to learn that the Moors of Tunis are the



descendants of the Spanish Saracens, and form an exclusive and aristocratic clan. 'They are nearly all engaged in trade, and impress by their dignified languor and suave politeness.' Many of them preserve the old door-keys of their Spanish houses, and one scent seller (perhaps our friend) is a lineal descendant of the Abencerrages.\*

Certainly their manners are the perfection of courtesy, and their movements of dignity, and indeed nothing struck us more in these crowded lanes than the perfect civility and even kindness we met with. When one of us wished to sketch, the shop-people in the vicinity would vie with each other as to who should provide her with a chair, take an active interest in her proceedings, and do their best to keep off obtrusive lookers-on; and we could wander everywhere alone without being annoyed in the slightest degree. On the

\* For this and much more of our information respecting Tunis and its history we are indebted to Mr. A. Broadley's interesting book, 'Tunis Past and Present.'

other hand, we must confess that our dear Arabs know how to 'open their mouths,' as we have heard it described; they appear to make a rule of always asking about five times the price they will eventually take with delight. They always began by saying they could not possibly think of accepting a penny less than the original demand, but would be charmed to make us a present of the article in question! Then they would shout to a street-boy to fetch some 'Café Arabe,' and while, often much against the grain, we were drinking the little cups of strong, black, sweet coffee, the discussion would continue, and would generally result in our obtaining what we wanted at the price we first offered. The wares were extremely tempting, and in many cases were in course of actual manufacture. All the tailors sit and stitch on their thresholds, making and embroidering bournouse, children's little jackets, and all sorts of garments of lovely colours; the

shoemakers, the leather-workers, and all, were busily employed at their trades, but not too busily to be unable to leave off for any length of time in order to concern themselves with us and our affairs.

These bazaars were terribly tempting places, and I think we all wished for better filled purses in order to invest in more carpets, brass trays, cups, bournouse, old and new stuffs, etc., than under the circumstances our consciences would permit, elastic though they often proved to be.

Once we walked through a poorer quarter close to the bazaars, but saw nowhere signs of great poverty or squalor. Here a crowd of children had been attracted by a bagpipe player, with a poor little girl dancing and performing tricks with a great snake which she wound round her neck and arms, and I was struck with the dress of the little girls; who wore tight white inexpressibles, ending in footless stockings, their feet being bare, while the wee boys

appeared to be dressed in one single garment, a sort of blouse, hanging loose from the throat to the knees, and generally of some bright colour.

We were shown over the palace of the Bey by a fat individual whom we understood from the interpreter to be a *general*, but who accepted a small donation with gratitude. Several of the state rooms are sparsely furnished in a gaudy French style, devoid of taste or beauty, but others had beautiful, Alhambra-like coloured ceilings and white Moorish moulded work on the walls. There is a fine marble court in the centre of the building, roofed in with very coarse glass. A large room opened into this court, surrounded by a number of little sleeping apartments for the use of the Bey's ministers, who all accompany him when he comes here, which he only does once a year for one night.

The Bey's authority, since the arrival of the French, appears to be purely nomi-

nal. Mr. Broadley's account of the transactions which led to French interference, and to their ultimate occupation of the Regency is very interesting, and not quite pleasant reading, as throughout it appears that, had the British Government seen fit to offer the smallest remonstrance, it would not have taken place, and that the Tunisians placed the greatest confidence in England, and were bitterly disappointed when she failed them.

One result is that the French now possess in Bizerta a harbour which an excellent authority states could easily be made available for the fleets of the world, at a cost of less than a quarter of a million, and which is situated on our high-road to Egypt—*i.e.*, to India. We were told by a friend that this work is either in hand or soon will be, and that the French authorities will not permit any English to visit the harbour at all, if they can by any means prevent it.

For years it appears that the French have been intriguing to obtain a permanent footing in the Regency, which, as its name imports, has never been considered an independent kingdom, but has always acknowledged the sovereignty of the Porte. At last, in 1881, a pretext, though a very flimsy one, for active interference was found in the so-called 'Khamir Raids' on the Algerian frontier. The importance of these raids was much exaggerated, but, such as they were, the Bey was willing and able to put a stop to them, and sent troops for the purpose which were never permitted to act, the French marching an army across the frontier, while their ships bombarded Tabarca, although nominally at peace with the Bey, whose flag was flying there.

Even then the English Government declined to interfere, but showed a child-like and touching faith in the promises of the French ministers and of their agent,

Monsieur Roustan, who declared that no permanent occupation was intended. Then followed the taking of Bizerta, and three weeks afterwards the French army entered Tunis. Needless to say, it was another case of 'J'y suis, j'y reste.' The crowning act was the march to Kairwan, which was of no apparent advantage except as a demonstration, and which surrendered without a blow on the 26th of October.

It was with great regret that, owing to lack of time, we abandoned the idea of visiting this wonderful town, *the* Holy City of North Africa, which, founded in 675 by the Emir Okhbah, was never visited by a Christian for a thousand years. Even then, entrance could only be obtained by special order from the Bey, and the visitor was hurried through the streets and shown as little as possible. It is a city of mosques, the chief of which, that of Okhbah, contains seventeen aisles and four hundred and thirty-nine columns; and

in another, the grandest building of all, is seen the tomb of Abdullāh, the personal friend of Mahomet, who died and was buried there twelve hundred years ago.

The entrance of the French army into this sacred and almost unknown town must indeed have been an interesting and remarkable sight. There is now no difficulty in visiting Kairwan, except that which prevented us from doing so, namely the distance from Susa and the want of accommodation for travellers.

We went to Tunis every day during our stay at Goletta, for we never could tire of the beautiful and picturesque bazaars, which will always remain among our pleasantest recollections. Scarcely one European was ever to be met there, and the crowd consisted entirely of men in every variety of costume, flowing white bournouse prevailing; but these robes, which were made of very delicate textures, were often of various colours, which always blended with the



different shades of their other garments in a manner most pleasing to the eye, and were draped and worn with extraordinary grace and dignity.

The few women to be seen were either Moorish, swathed from head to foot in white, with only their eyes visible, or Jewish, and, although the latter also wear a kind of mantle thrown over their heads and bodies, they do not attempt to conceal their singularly ungraceful costume of *tights* and short, sleeveless shirts or jackets over sleeved waistcoats, while the high horns they have on their heads, generally made of stiff gold tissue, cause the mantles to stick up in a peak, which is very ugly. One rich Jewess attended by her maid we saw, whose under dress was entirely composed of cloth of silver.

An account of a visit to Tunis would indeed be incomplete if it contained no mention of Carthage. But, alas, 'The saying of Cato is indeed the very truth !' It seems

incomprehensible how so vast a city, covering such an enormous extent of ground, could vanish so completely from the face of the earth, and makes one feel it possible that when Macaulay's celebrated New Zealander pays his visit to the site of London he may find no ruins, even, left to moralise over!

The city of Carthage was built on a peninsula which now comprises the town of Goletta, and is crowned by the chapel built by King Louis Philippe to the memory of Saint Louis, who died there. The land side is skirted by the railway to Tunis, from which various shapeless mounds of earth are visible, which we were told were the ruins of Carthage, but, cruising round the coast in the steam launch, we really did see some remains of masonry under water, probably the foundations of great quays, and on the strand, portions of the sea wall and fragments of marble columns and fortifications. We did not go round

the point to the other side of the peninsula, where, perhaps, we should have seen more, but no doubt the enormous mounds with which the whole place is covered would well repay excavation, and probably conceal treasures of architecture and antiquity which would delight any enterprising lover of the past who could devote time and money to bringing them to light.





## CHAPTER VIII.

### AN ARAB HAREM.



ONLY once did we attempt to go to Tunis by water, and our experiences on this occasion were not such as to lead us to repeat the experiment. Having been told by those who should have known, that there was sufficient water in the lake for the steam launch, we engaged a useless individual calling himself a pilot, and, steaming up the short canal which divides the roadstead from the broad sheet of salt water on which Tunis stands, we for a short time proceeded gaily on our course,

being greatly encouraged by the sight of several large feluccas sailing about in all directions, and with a misplaced confidence in the said pilot, who, however, gave no assistance by word or sign, the fact being that it did not much matter where we went, and that nowhere does the lake attain to a greater depth than two feet.

Soon our speed became ominously retarded; the little propeller began to make a fuss, and we could trace our wake by the mass of weed we were churning up. This weed was short and of a bright grass-green, and really, but for the honour of the thing, the launch might have been a mowing-machine! The wind being fresh and right abaft, the lug sail was now hoisted, and for a little while we made better progress; but this improvement lasted only a few minutes, and then we came to a standstill.

Here was a pleasant quandary: two miles from shore, and not even a dingey

for a lifeboat ! In our own beloved native land, if one *does* stick on a river mud-bank, one can, at all events, look forward to the blessed flood tide coming to one's assistance, but here we had not even this hope, and we began to contemplate walking onshore (?), when we saw a large felucca approaching. Joyfully we hailed her, and as she passed, a line was cleverly hove on board her and caught by one of her men, who promptly let it slip through his fingers, which must have been pleasant for them. We saw him dancing about and shaking them.

Despair was again seizing our hearts, when, to our relief, the felucca wore, came round under the little 'Salamis' stern, and this time managed to secure the tow-rope. These boats are large and powerful, and with their two great lateen sails run splendidly before the wind ; so now our troubles were over, and we were dragged by main force through the weed and mud until we

found ourselves alongside the quay at Tunis.

The felucca's crew consisted entirely of Sicilians, of whom there are great numbers at Goletta, and in their language our old interpreter freely objurgated 'Angelo,' the skipper (anything but an angelic looking being) for his failure to lay hold of us at first.

We had one most amusing experience at Tunis which we look back upon with much satisfaction. Miss R., an English lady residing in Tunis, had very kindly promised to take us to see the wife of an Arab gentleman who belonged to one of the few remaining Arab noble families in Tunis. At the appointed hour we all drove together to the rendezvous, and T., E., and M. joined Miss R., while C., Mr. W., and F. (the two latter looking very envious) went off to ruin themselves as usual over Persian carpets and rugs.

After a short drive we arrived at the

house, which was an insignificant, untidy building outside, but the staircase had picturesque, open arches round it, and was prettily decorated with tiles. We were ushered into an immense room, quite unlike what one was led to expect from the exterior. Here we were met by the son of the house, in European dress and fez, who, having been educated in Paris, spoke French fluently, and he very civilly invited us to sit down while he went away to inform his mother of our arrival.

During his absence we scrutinised everything most carefully, as can well be imagined. The room was very large, and square in shape, with a deep recess at one end where ottomans were placed against the walls, and there stood two small grand pianos matching each other, and at the end a high little sideboard with a huge French clock and vases of artificial flowers on either side of it. The centre of the room, which was all paved with white



marble, was completely bare, but for a small billiard table, and between the windows was the most gigantic cheval glass we had ever seen, while on either side of the door there were two great scarlet and gold cabinets, the wedding chests of the owner's grandfather, which in their peculiar way were very handsome.

If the truth were known, we were a trifle disappointed to hear that G. had but one wife, for we had secretly hoped to see a whole row of wives, and perhaps we were also slightly disenchanted to find his son like any other European gentleman of good manners. This, together with a sort of French surface to the furniture, made the contrast all the more wonderful, when, after a few moments spent by us in anxious expectation, our friend returned and presented his mother—'Voici ma mère,' with a wave of the hand.

We all rose, and in walked a most dignified little old lady, with a face such as

you see on many a chaperon's bench in a London ball room, her head surmounted by a golden horn covered with a thin, gauzy stuff which was wound tight round the neck and shoulders, a very short camisol like a child's shift of fine embroidered silk, with white sleeves coming from underneath, and below—the tightest of white hunting breeches, ending in white stockings all woven in a piece, and the feet in very small laced embroidered slippers.

The effect was beyond words astonishing, and, the more gracious and dignified she was, the stranger the contrast appeared between the upper and the lower portion of her attire. A minute later followed her daughter, a very handsome young lady about twenty-one, very highly rouged, and her eyebrows painted so as almost to meet; and then they led the way into another large, marble paved drawing room or hall, where we sat down and looked pleasantly

at each other, the son doing the talking, for the ladies could not speak a word of anything but Arabic.

Presently the father came in, and told us with great pride that he had been in England, and pointed out to us two full-length portraits of the Duke of Wellington and Nelson, remarking with a chuckle, 'The French don't like to see these !'

Then the son brought in his sister's baby, a pretty little tiny creature with eyes like black beads, and a little red hood on its head. It had burnt its hand very badly, which was still bandaged up ; it seemed very fond of its uncle, who carried it about, and seemed much more devoted to it than its mother, who sat on the divan and surveyed it with calmness, not to say indifference. It sat on M.'s knee and played very contentedly with her parasol for a few minutes, till the negro nurse was summoned, who entered in the same semi-masculine attire, if possible still tighter

and more destitute of skirt than the ladies, and carried off her little charge.

All this time we sat and conversed, or rather made signs to our hostesses, while strangely clad servant-women flitted through the other end of the room (doubtless to have a look at the English flowing-robed strangers), and then coffee was brought and handed to us by the son—such delicious coffee as it was, too, only spoilt by its excessive sweetness; and presently there came out of another room a woman, chattering and gesticulating, and sat down beside us like a favoured member of the family.

‘*C’est la raconteuse,*’ explained the son, ‘*elle raconte des histoires et fait rire les dames, et les amuse.*’ In fact, she was a sort of jester or court fool. She was evidently a privileged person, and would not attend to the old lady when she bid her be quiet, but stood in front of us and harangued us, and said how much she would like to

come to England, and would even brave sea-sickness in a yacht if she could only do so. All this in flowing Arabic, translated for our benefit by the son.

The life of these ladies must be a terribly dull and monotonous one. M. said to the daughter, thoughtlessly, 'How very pretty the bazaars are!'

'Ah!' interrupted her brother, 'you know she has never seen them; they are never allowed to go out except in a closed carriage with the blinds down, so they can only see what is visible through the chinks.'

They gave us a most cordial invitation to visit another married sister who lives in the country, and much we should have liked to accept the invitation, but time forbade our doing so; and after most hearty hand-shakes all round, and a great deal of bowing, we departed, very much interested and edified by our glimpse into the interior of an Arab 'harem.' Having returned to the house of our friend, where we found

C. already arrived, and having been hospitably entertained with some excellent English tea, we drove back to the station, C. recounting to us on the way, how, after a most exciting bargain, she had come off victor, witness a gigantic package containing a Persian carpet of great beauty, which it had wrung the heart of Barbouchi to part with, and sundry other unwieldy parcels which hardly left space for the driver to perch sideways on the box. We got on board about five, and hoisted sail at once, for a fair wind was blowing, and left Tunis with heartfelt regret.





## CHAPTER IX.

### MALTA.



WE had a splendid run to Malta. 'Ariadne' danced, capered, and finally flew over the waves at the rate of ten to twelve knots, with a fair wind and a choppy sea. It was horrible,—but no matter; to others it was delightful, and the feeling that one was losing no time, but getting over the distance as quickly as we could possibly go, was some consolation, as one clung to one's berth with hands and knees, and held on for dear life; though, to M.'s mind, never does one hold one's life so cheap as at such moments!

We weighed anchor about six p.m., found a leading wind outside, and were rounding Cape Bon, forty miles from Goletta, by 10.45. This fine headland, with its lighthouse, looked to great advantage that breezy night as the surf broke on its black rocks, now distinctly visible and then partially obscured as the clouds chased each other across the moon, and 'Ariadne' flew gaily past it, dashing the surf from her bows and escorted by a shoal of porpoises whose sides and back fins gleamed in the sparkling water.

When we rounded the point, the sheets were eased off, as the wind came still more free; and after this not a rope was touched, except indeed to add to the mass of snow-white canvas which, boomed out on either side, must have given the yacht the appearance of some lovely sea bird on the wing, until we had passed Gozo, when the spinnaker was got in, we jibed over and found ourselves entering the Grand Har-



bour of Valetta, just twenty-two hours after we had left Tunis.

As we neared the shore all the bad sailors emerged from their hiding-places like old flies, and sat on deck, weak, but happy in the prospect of tea and repose, and we watched our entrance between the great forts of Ricasoli and St. Elmo into the Grand Harbour. All went well for some minutes, and we proceeded under sail; but, just as we were nearing our anchorage, an unearthly yell, like the miaul of ten thousand cats at night, rose in the air, and the white nose of the great troopship 'Tamar' came sweeping round the corner across our bows, blowing her siren to warn us of her approach. She just shaved past us, but the poor little 'Ariadne,' flustered and bewildered at the sight of the great monster, let her sails flap as she lost the wind, and we all but ran ashore. There was a moment's breathless suspense as it seemed as if our bowsprit were about to

sweep off all the crowd which had collected on the quay to witness our proceedings, but the anchor, which was dropped in the nick of time, just saved us; we slowly came round and had to submit to be towed to our proper place, where we backed in between the yachts 'Firefly' and 'Ariona,' and took breath.

We little thought, as we settled ourselves in our cosy corner in French Creek, that we should spend a whole month there; but so it was, and excepting for the one drawback, viz., the cause of our detention, seldom have we passed so pleasant a month, or one which went by so quickly.





## CHAPTER X.

### MALTA.



THE Mediterranean fleet was in Malta, the Duke of Edinburgh in command, and it was a sight which might well give one a feeling of pardonable pride, to look at those magnificent ships as they lay at anchor in the various inlets of the harbour, in all the stillness and repose of conscious power.

We cannot help enumerating them, for they are a goodly list of names. Nearly all of them were there together, though two or three came and went. The 'Alexandra,' flagship of the Duke of Edinburgh, the

‘Dreadnought,’ the ‘Thunderer,’ the ‘Colussus,’ the ‘Agamemnon,’ the ‘Téméraire,’ the ‘Superb,’ the ‘Carysfort,’ the ‘Polyphemus’ (that marvel of mechanical science), the ‘Scout,’ the ‘Surprise,’ the ‘Cruiser,’ the ‘Phaeton,’ the ‘Condor,’ and the old ‘Hibernia.’ What a list! and yet, hidden away as they were in the different creeks, it seemed impossible to realise what a fleet was there assembled as we tiny mites came into their midst.

The first sight of Malta is not one easily to be forgotten; nothing strikes one so forcibly coming from those dead-alive ports on the African coast as the wonderful life and busy stir that one sees on entering the harbour. Dhjaisos (the Maltese shore-boats) skim over the water like flies over a pond, and in the same numbers; steam-boats of every nation and size come in at all hours of the day and night; harbour tugs, pouring forth volumes of smoke, labour away with their barges in tow; men-

of-war boats sweep by, with that lordly air which only a man-of-war's boat knows how to assume ; beautiful yachts (like ours ?) come sailing in, and the admiral's gondola floats past expecting and receiving salutes ; steam launches go fussing along as if all the world belonged to them ; and far above them all, in lofty, placid indifference, lie the giant men-of-war like mountains where reigns eternal snow, calmly surveying the busy, antlike stir at their feet.

After a good night's rest, we awoke next morning to a new world. Our dear Arabs had passed away like a dream ; no more white turbaned, gorgeously dressed Moors, languidly and with slow dignity condescending to sell you their wares ; no more noble indifference to time, and quiet tranquillity of demeanour ; we were no longer in the past, beautiful and picturesque as it was, we were in the living, breathing present, and mind and body were speedily aroused to the fact.

At four o'clock, a.m., the bells began, and, as we had the misfortune to be anchored close under a church with a singularly active and aggressive bell, our sleep was henceforward to be of a scrappy and uncertain nature ; that is to say, with most of us, for in a few days F. and M., with their usual adaptability of character, slept through it all most peacefully.

But to return. At four o'clock, as I said, the bells began their clanging, and a ' lulla-by on sixteen bagpipes ' was a joke to it. There was the high toned, wrangling bell over our heads, then two contradictory bells, rung in very rapid succession, which resembled a beginner on the pianoforte practising shakes with the third finger ; then a deeper and most provokingly slow bell, which always rang *one*, just after you had made up your mind it had finished ; then others of different sorts, which, all being rung at odd moments, kept up a dropping fire till sunrise and gunfire, when

you nearly jumped out of bed at the boom echoing down the harbour from the Baracca terrace on the height above. Then a distant swish, swash might be heard coming from 'forward,' and you gave up sleep as a bad job, and resigned yourself, as the swish, swash, and the scrub, and rub of brushes scouring the deck over your head came nearer and nearer, and the tramp of wet bare feet and the sound of the water running out through the scuppers made you sigh in despair. Then that died away in the distance, and was succeeded by the solitary sound of the squeegee as it came round, drying up the deck in that satisfactory manner which squeegees have.

Now, you think to yourself, there is still time for half-an-hour's snooze; but by this time all the world is astir, and it is getting quite late on board our big neighbours, and you hear their boatswains shouting themselves hoarse and piping their whistles, and a steamer or two goes out,

announcing its departure by a roaring bellow, and the dingey has to be lowered for the steward to go on shore, and then there is a moment's breathing-time, and tired out you fall into a gentle doze, when bang, louder than ever, thunders forth the eight o'clock gun, and from every man-of-war simultaneously rises a fanfare of trumpets, caught up from ship to ship throughout the harbour, and then dying away as the bands on the 'Thunderer' and 'Dreadnought,' which lie nearest to us, burst into 'God save the Queen,' and Mrs. M'C. opens the cabin-door and says, 'Eight o'clock, my lady.'

What strange vicissitudes has Malta witnessed since the days when this barren, stony little island first attracted the Phœnician settlers to cast anchor on its rocky coast! Without being so rash as to wish to follow the example of some person of whom we were told, who wrote a history of Malta after a week's visit to the island,



yet it is impossible to pass over in complete silence the successive stages of its wild, legendary, then warlike, and heroic existence. Probably no other spot in the world has seen the tide of so many and various nationalities ebb and flow over its bleak and desolate shores. Each has left its traces behind it, and it must be an interesting study to anyone capable of distinguishing and appreciating them to trace the influence and impress these successive waves have left on the language, customs, and habits of the Maltese.

Legend and tradition have both been busy weaving fantastical myths as to the earliest settlers on the island, who apparently were a no less celebrated race than the giants who made war against Jupiter, and whose mighty bones have been found imbedded in the fossil stone rocks. But alas! that a Monkbarns should always have an Edie Ochiltree at hand, to bring down his antiquarian flights to the dead level of

sober reason ! These remains have since been recognised as the bones of some fossil elephant or hippopotamus, which in themselves, though putting to flight these myths of fancy with their ponderous realities, open out a vista of a different nature, running back into the far, far and wondrous distance when this island, we can but suppose, formed part of a vast mainland where these monsters lived, and moved, and had their being.

The rocks appear to be singularly rich in fossil remains, and, from what we heard of the discoveries made there, it must indeed prove a paradise to the geologist. The remains of gigantic swans are found here or at Gozo, three times the size of those of the present day, elephants, hippopotami, ichthyosauras, and *least*, but not last in interest, the fossil bones of pigmy elephants about the size of a small donkey. Naturalists can certify to their being those of a full-grown animal, for in the skull of

one of these strange little beasts was discovered a molar tooth only to be found in full-grown elephants of a certain age.

Passing from legend to history, the Phœnicians were the first known inhabitants of the island, and some historians suppose that their settling here about 1500 B.C. was coeval with the expulsion of the Canaanites by Joshua, but how far these two facts may bear upon each other we leave it to wiser heads than ours to express an opinion.

After the Phœnicians, who have left very tangible tokens of their existence on the island, and who changed its name from Hyperia to Oxygeia, the Greeks were the next settlers, whose colonisation is recorded about 700 B.C. They are said to have principally occupied the coast, leaving the interior to the natives, and they again changed its name to Melita, from the word Melitta (bee), or Meli (honey), for which Malta then, as now, was famous.

Next came the Carthaginians and Romans, and many interesting remains of the latter's occupation are still to be seen at Notabile and elsewhere, and numbers of coins, bas-reliefs, etc., now removed to the museum. A large and very beautiful gem was discovered among other things engraved with the signs of the Zodiac, and this valuable stone was supposed to have been presented last century to Louis XVI. All trace of it, however, was lost till quite lately, when it was found to be in the possession of a family in Malta who would probably be willing to part with it if a sufficient sum were offered by the Government for its purchase.\*

In the year 58 A.D. St. Paul was shipwrecked on the island. The identity of the Melita of the Acts with Malta has been disputed, and it has been suggested that it might be another small island in the Adriatic of the same name; but, in addition to the fact that Adria in those days embraced

\* See 'Maltese Islands'—GODWIN.

all those seas which stretch down as far as Malta and Gozo, a universal tradition such as this one generally proves itself right, in the teeth of archæologists, antiquarians, and historians, and it is more than probable that this was really the island where 'the barbarous people showed no little kindness' to St. Paul and his shipwrecked companions.

Every spot on the side of the coast where his ship is said to have run aground has some story or legend attached to it, and, though of course many additions and exaggerations have grown up with each succeeding age, yet doubtless in many instances there is a foundation of truth which would suffice to give a deep interest to the place.

Near Kaura Point in St. Paul's Bay it was supposed that the shipmen deemed that 'they drew near to some country, and sounded and found twenty fathoms, and when they had gone a little further they

sounded again and found fifteen fathoms,' and the soundings to this day correspond with these measurements. The fishing-boats, too, still fly to this creek for refuge in a 'gregale' or north-east wind, the Euroclydon of the Acts.

At a little distance from the shore, stands a small church of the seventeenth century, built on the site of an older building, and said to be the spot where they lighted a fire 'because of the present rain and because of the cold.' Publius' house, says tradition, lay further inland, and, to quote the Rev. G. N. Godwin, 'To the left, on the hillside above the road, is a little chapel, reared upon a spot which has for many centuries borne the traditional name of San Paul el Milki, or St. Paul received, whereon it has always been said that Publius, who was governing the island during the illness of his father, received the ship-wrecked voyagers. Nor is it by any means improbable that such was the

case. But no direct confirmation of the tradition existed until lately, when excavations, which are still going on, brought to light on this very spot the remains of a large and ancient oil-mill, which, from various indications, is clearly proved to be contemporaneous with the visit of St. Paul to the island. Remains of a dwelling-house or villa are close by. The oil-vats and millstones, worked by mules or slave labour, are *in situ*. Fragments of tessellated pavement, a votive altar, partition walls, subterranean constructions, and in short all the accessories of the country residence of an opulent Roman, exist here.'

A less well-authenticated legend asserts that not far from the building of St. Paul's Tower is the Ghain Rasul fountain of the Apostle, who being tormented with thirst caused the spring to break forth. The spring is there, but this legend, together with one or two others, is somewhat like those beautiful flowering creepers which

climb over the fallen stones of some ancient ruin, and so completely obscure them from view that one is tempted to ask, 'Are the stones really there?' On another spot he is said to have planted the Cross, and as he preached to the people his voice could be heard at Gozo !

Close by, at Rabato, is a curious cave where the Apostle is supposed to have lived during his three months' stay on the island, and tradition says the stone within, is of great virtue in the cure of snake-bites, fever, &c., and though much stone may be broken away yet the stone does not diminish in quantity.

When St. Paul sailed away to Syracuse, he is said to have converted the inhabitants *en masse* to Christianity, and Publius was made first bishop of the island.

At the partition of the Roman Empire, Malta fell to the Eastern division, and for many years little or nothing is known of its history. In 87 A.D. the Arabs invaded



and took possession of it, putting all the male inhabitants to the sword and selling the women and children into captivity. In spite of the efforts of the Byzantine Emperors to dislodge them, they remained there undisturbed until the year 1090, when Count Roger the Norman, after successfully defeating the Arabs in Sicily, made an expedition to Malta for the same purpose, in which he was speedily successful. He was gladly welcomed by the Christian inhabitants, who greeted him as their deliverer. Many of the Arabs were permitted to remain on the payment of an annual tribute, until they were finally expelled in 1243 by order of the Emperor Frederick.

Count Roger erected a fortress at Città Vecchia, strengthened 'The Castle on the Rock,' now Fort St. Angelo, and rebuilt the cathedral in the ancient capital. He treated the Arabs with kindness, and having settled the affairs of the island he returned

to Sicily, taking with him many Christian slaves, and died in Calabria in the year 1101.

The Arabs, however, were not content to remain as subjects in the island where they had reigned as conquerors. They accordingly entered into a conspiracy to rise and massacre the Christians whilst occupied in the religious services of Holy Week; the plot was discovered, however, and the Christians turned the tables and fell upon the Arabs at the fountain called Ghain Clieb on the roadside between Città Vecchia and Benjemma, with shouts of 'Kill the dogs,' from whence the fountain to this day bears the name of the Dogs' well. With Frederick II., son of Constance, granddaughter of Roger, and wife of Henry VI. Emperor of Germany, began the rule of the Suabian sovereigns over the island in 1194. After a short period of sixty-seven years of German rule, followed by that of the Angevins, the Aragonese obtained, through

marriage, possession of the island, and held sway there until 1530, in which year Charles V. made over Malta and Gozo to the Knights of St. John.

The original deed of gift is preserved, and can be seen in the armoury of the Governor's palace.





## CHAPTER XI.

### THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN.



WITH the advent of the Knights of St. John, begins the most interesting and important period of Malta's history. At that time, such was its bareness and desolation that after the famous siege of Rhodes by the Turks—when the Knights, despite their heroic resistance, were forced to retreat before overwhelming odds—L'Isle Adam, the Grand Master, hesitated before accepting Charles V.'s offer; and when finally it was settled, and the Knights were established on the island, it was long before they

looked upon it otherwise than as a temporary resting-place.

Their first task was to set to work to strengthen the fortifications, in anticipation of a renewed attack from the Turks, which in fact was not long delayed. In May, 1565, their fleet of one hundred and sixty large vessels, besides a great number of smaller craft, was discovered bearing down upon the coast, and La Valette, the Grand Master then reigning, strained every nerve to meet this enormous force to the best of his ability. He had at his disposal about eight thousand five hundred rank and file, besides serving brothers of the order and seven hundred Knights, these latter being the flower of Christian chivalry; and having drawn a huge chain right across the mouth of the Grand Harbour, which was further defended by the fortress of St. Elmo on the one side and St. Angelo and two others opposite, he awaited the onslaught of Solyman's overwhelming host,

trusting in God in the words with which he addressed his followers: 'To inspire us with such a noble contempt of death as can alone make us invincible.'\*

St. Elmo was the first point of attack, and towards the reduction of this fort all the heavy artillery and musketry of the attacking force were directed. But the men with whom they had to deal were skilled veterans, highly trained in all the arts of warfare; they were also fighting for their lives, and defending themselves against the enemies of their race and their religion; and as Mustapha, the Turkish commander, hurled mass after mass of men against the ramparts, with that total disregard of human life which belongs to his nation, and which his overwhelming numbers enabled him to do with impunity, they were mowed down in files by the besieged, only to have their places refilled by others.

\* See 'Military Religious Orders'—WOODHOUSE.

Matters, however, could not go on thus for ever. The moment came when St. Elmo was invested on every side and the enemy could walk up to the walls, which, moreover, were crumbling beneath the feet of the defenders.

During the night they managed to communicate with La Valette, and, acquainting him with their desperate situation, urged on him to abandon the fort. To this La Valette would not consent; but, while permitting any who chose to retire, he called for volunteers for this forlorn hope, and prepared to defend it to the last. The result may be supposed, and none would leave the post of honour and danger. Day after day the attack was renewed, and the ranks of the noble defenders grew thinner and thinner, and the walls were now but a heap of stones. Worn out and weary, faint and harassed, they held on to the end, while La Valette could only watch from a distance the devoted fort where his

gallant Knights were selling their lives so dear. One more desperate attempt he made to succour them, but in vain. Though the Turkish soldiers lay dead in thousands round the fort, and one of their leaders, Dragut himself, was among the slain, yet there were thousands more in reserve, and other leaders to take his place; the walls were gone, the defences but a name, and there remained to him now but the stern task of passively awaiting the end.

Some years ago there was discovered within the precincts of the St. Elmo fort a small chapel with the arms of the Knights carved in stone on the walls. It is impossible to enter this little building, now bare, deserted, and empty, without a strange feeling of awe coming over one as a very different scene rises before one's imagination. Here, the night before the final struggle, assembled at midnight the



little band of Knights, and kneeling before the altar received their last communion, while the hideous din of warfare sounded in their ears, and the shouts of their destroyers mingled with their prayers. Then issuing forth in the early dawn, with peace in their hearts and their lives in their hands,

‘They turned them to the coming host in steadfastness and  
glee,

They died, God wot! but not before their sword had drunk  
its fill.’

Closing up their ranks, they formed themselves into a close phalanx, and for four hours they withstood the desperate and ever-renewed onslaught of the enemy. Then like a flood, the Turkish host rushed over them, and La Valette saw the Crescent wave from the spot where stood the Cross of St. John, and knew that all was over.

Such was the defence of St. Elmo, and though the loss sustained was very great—for the defenders perished to a man—yet their courage had delayed the siege of Malta

for a month, and cost the Turks eight thousand men. Meanwhile, a most timely reinforcement arrived from Sicily, and with difficulty managed to join La Valette; after a short interval, during which the demand of Mustapha to surrender the whole island was rejected with scorn, the weary round of defence and attack began again, only that this time St. Angelo and St. Michael, instead of St. Elmo, were the centre of the struggle.

It would take too long to enter into the details of the siege, but mercifully for Malta, and indeed for Europe itself, the mighty struggle ended in victory for the Knights, and Malta still remained as a bulwark to Christendom from the Turks. On visiting the scene of the fight after it was over, the Viceroy of Sicily gave to it the name it now bears of *Vittorioso*.

Profiting by experience, La Valette determined to transfer his capital from *Notabile* (or *Città Vecchia*) to the promontory

opposite St. Angelo, where a new city was built and named Valetta after its founder. The fortress of St. Elmo was rebuilt, and the fortifications of the whole island were strengthened and put in repair, while the ships of the order scoured the seas of the Mediterranean, causing terror to the Turkish rebels, rescuing Christian slaves from captivity, and returning home laden with treasure and the spoils of conquest.

From this time, the prosperity of Malta was continually on the increase, and for the next two hundred years it continued to maintain its independency ; the people, being well protected from without, cultivated their land in security, and laboured to such effect that, from being a mere barren rock, it has come to be like a highly cultivated garden, of which not a foot of land is allowed to lie waste. The climate has been against these persevering cultivators of the soil, and nothing strikes one more, than the total absence of any tree

but the caroub that cowers its head beneath the shelter of the walls which intersect the whole country like a labyrinth, as if to hide itself from the scorching scirocco wind or the tempestuous 'gregale,' which rival each other in sweeping over the island.

In 1798 the French fleet under Napoleon appeared before Malta. The troops having landed, met with some resistance on the part of the Knights, but the days of their glory were departed, the seeds of revolution had been sown even here, and their opposition was but feeble. Before long the gates were opened to the invader, Malta surrendered to the French, and the Knights were commanded to quit the island in three days. Hompesch was the name of the last Grand Master who reigned there.

Much of the treasure accumulated by them during the past two centuries, in addition to what had been brought from Rhodes, was carried away by Napoleon and

subsequently lost in one of the ships which were blown up at the battle of the Nile.

A few months later in the same year, Nelson laid siege to Malta and took it, and in the Treaty of Paris its possession was confirmed to England by the consent of Europe.





## CHAPTER XII.

### SIGHT-SEEING.

**T**HE English Government thus became the inheritor of the Knights and Grand Master, and much of the land is Government property. The people are barely taxed at all, and few parts of the world are so favoured in this respect. Nevertheless the Maltese have their grievances like other people, and fancy them the harder to bear because they are slightly imaginary.

Perhaps a certain hauteur of manner, with which English people are sometimes

inclined to treat other nations, and which with them is consistent with the kindest of actions, has something to do with it; but certain it is that they are discontented, and like spoilt children cry for something, they hardly know what, and show themselves more than ever unfit to manage their own affairs, by the childishness of their petty grudges and spites against their most indulgent rulers.

But our readers will be tired of Maltese history, which seems to have spun itself out longer than we intended. We may as well speak of some of the things we saw there instead. First and foremost is St. John's church, which impresses one by its size and by the beautiful colours of the marbles with which it is ornamented; with its gilded walls it ought to look gaudy, but somehow does not.

The roof is all painted with large figure-subjects, and portraits of Grand Masters, the general effect of which is very good;

but undoubtedly the most remarkable feature of this grand church is the pavement, which consists entirely of large memorial slabs to the Knights of Malta buried there; and these are most admirably inlaid in coloured marbles, with coats-of-arms and heraldic devices; this pavement is very beautiful and strikes one much.

St. John's church must so often have been described that we will not expatiate upon its beauties, but must just mention the two side chapels, which are very impressive, with their subdued light and old red damask walls. One of these has altar rails and gates of silver; to save these from the cupidity of the French, they were painted black, and thus saved from spoliation when Napoleon occupied the island. The church possesses a wonderful treasure in its Flemish tapestry. This has been restored at a cost of two thousand four hundred pounds by the Government to whom, as inheritor of the Knights, it really



belongs. The work of restoration has been most beautifully carried out by Signor Palmieri, who himself showed us the tapestry. He told us that he had employed thirty work-people for eight years; some portions have had to be entirely renewed, and certainly the work has been well done, it being almost impossible to distinguish the new from the old, while the latter has been admirably cleaned. All the worsted used for repairs was procured from France; it is very fine and as strong as string, and is all white when imported, Signor Palmieri dyeing it himself any shade required. He had just completed his task, and the tapestry was to take its old place on the walls of St. John's church at the coming Easter festivities.

The old residence of the Grand Masters, and now that of the Governor, is one of the most interesting buildings in Valetta, and includes the Armoury, Library, and Museum.

The rooms are magnificent in size and proportion, with elaborately painted friezes, the subjects of which are generally allegorical, and contain many valuable relics of their chivalrous inhabitants.

In the drawing-room, among many other interesting pictures there hangs one of the Grand Master Wignacourt, who died in 1622, painted by Caravaggio, a really splendid portrait. He wears a suit of inlaid armour, which has been preserved and which we were shown in the dining-room, where is also the armour worn by the great Grand Masters L'Isle Adam and La Valette, of whom there are good portraits. A few pieces of the original furniture, carved or inlaid in wood, exist, two or three very good specimens of which were recently unearthed in a lumber-room, so incrusted with dirt that they were on the point of being sold as rubbish when some one fortunately discovered their value.

The wide cork-screw staircase, which

leads both to the Governor's own dwelling and to the Armoury, is of white marble, and the steps are so shallow and broad, it would seem almost possible to ride up it, only perhaps it might be rather too slippery.

A state ball or party at the Palace must be a fine sight, when all the great rooms, including the Armoury, are thrown open. This last consists of two very long galleries, which contain an enormous collection of the armour worn by the Knights of Malta, their squires and men-at-arms, besides some other most interesting relics, especially the trumpet on which the retreat was sounded when the Knights finally abandoned Rhodes, the sword of Dragut, the great Turkish commander, who was killed at the assault on St. Elmo, and the Emperor Charles V.'s original charter granting the Island of Malta to the Knights.

Round the Palace runs a broad cov-

ered balcony, on to which every room opens, and where it must be delightful to sit in the cool of the evening and watch the gay crowd below in St. George's Square. This used to be called the Piazza dei Cavalieri, and no Maltese were allowed to walk in it without special permission. On the opposite side of it is the main guard, over the door of which is an inscription which it is gratifying to an Englishman to read :

‘*Magnæ et invictæ Britanniae Militensium amor et Europæ vox has Insulas confirmant. A.D. 1814.*’

From the Palace we passed by the balcony, and, without going downstairs, into the public library and museum, where we were introduced to Dr. Caruana, the Curator, and he, most kindly, himself acted as our cicerone.

We were especially anxious to see the Kabiri, *i.e.*, the idols taken out of the Temple of Hagiar Khem, but were not

much edified by their appearance. They are certainly very curious, particularly when one remembers their extraordinary antiquity, but the horribly fat, cross-legged monsters are repulsively ugly, and are all headless, a fact which Dr. Caruana explained by the supposition that their heads were made of some soft clay or cement which had broken away from the stone bodies. They represent the Children of the Sun which was the supreme object of worship.

Among the other very ancient relics in the museum are some sarcophagi in which the bodies were discovered in perfect preservation, although they crumbled to dust as soon as they were exposed to the air, and a memorial of white marble with a Phœnician inscription, repeated below in Greek which has enabled antiquarians to identify several hitherto incomprehensible Phœnician words.

The museum contains quantities of

Roman antiquities, all found in the islands, and many of great interest, but of these we will only mention the fine bas-relief head of Penthiocele, Queen of the Amazons, with the beauty of which we were much struck.

The library must be a very valuable one, having been contributed by a succession of Grand Masters, and contains many beautiful old illuminated missals and other MSS., among which we would gladly have lingered, but we had other engagements, and were obliged to take our departure.

That evening we were invited to tea on board the 'Surprise,' to meet 'John,' the Captain's pet mongoose, a very funny, pretty little beast, and most amusing in his ways. He is very partial to eggs, and when given one, takes it in his front paws and 'chucks' it between his legs, behind him, on the chance of its hitting something hard, and he patiently repeats this process

until he has succeeded in cracking the egg, and then sucks out the contents with great gusto.

But, now that we have alluded to 'John,' it is time to speak of our 'Jane.' Her delicate features and wistful brown eyes have too long passed unnoticed; her slender and agile form, full of symmetry and grace, rise up before us as we write, and the gentle way in which she used to creep into F.'s arms for comfort, if she were annoyed or vexed, was a touching and pathetic sight.

Dear Jane! she won all our hearts, and to see her eat an orange was worth anything; she did everything but smile; she could chatter if not actually speak, and she could, and did cry like a child. When she came aft for a game of play, she would leap several feet into the air for joy, then fly on to the boom and look down at us with her head on one side, then make a dash at the companion, and gaze into its forbidden

depths. There were, I believe, shades in her character, but are there not in the noblest minds? She never forgave the second mate for washing her for the first time, and a sad vindictive spirit manifested itself in her otherwise sweet disposition whenever she saw him; she would bite and chatter with displeasure and show such strong tokens of disapproval that he hardly dared approach her. On the other hand, she loved E., who gave her flowers, and would come down from the rigging when she heard her call.

I once thought, too, that Jenny was not quite honest, but I scarcely like to say so of one so good and gentle. At a moment of general excitement, when all hands were occupied and we ourselves were going through a moment of breathless suspense, I saw Jenny seated in the companion, that prohibited spot, and from a post of vantage she was looking below, watching her opportunity for a dash into the cabin. O Jenny!



it was a lapse from virtue, but she did not do it *quite* ; for, whether conscience came to the rescue or she saw me looking on, I know not, but she vanished through the window at the opposite side, and in another minute or two came crying to be taken up, as if she were frightened at the noise and bustle around her. She would not be consoled till she found a refuge in F.'s arms under the ample folds of his boat-cloak, so that I hardly dare to allude to the dark suspicion which arose in my heart.

Jane was a perfect female Blondin, and could dance on the tight-rope or slack-rope with equal facility ; her crowning achievement was walking across the triatic stay and back again, amidst rounds of applause from the spectators below. (For the benefit of the unlearned, I must explain that the triatic stay is the rope which connects the two mast-heads, and therefore at a giddy height above the deck.)

A sad thing happened one day. Some-

one trod on her tail (for Jane is a monkey, though you may not have guessed it) ; she gave one little yelp, and then bore it bravely as one of the men bound it up gently and tenderly. She would sit down on the deck, take up her tail in her two hands, and look at it pathetically, and try to pull off the rag, and, when she became reconciled to its presence, it made one laugh—at the risk of hurting her feelings—to see her wave it in the air with the rag attached thereto. But I could run on forever with descriptions of Jane, and must restrain my pen for fear that our readers may not sympathise with our too partial affection.

We found many friends at Malta, and made many new ones, and, as they were all exceedingly kind to us, we very soon had our days full of engagements. C. and F. renewed acquaintance with several of their Suda Bay friends of the preceding year, and E. was, so to speak, in her own element

among ships of all kinds and sizes, from an iron-clad to a shore-boat; as for the others, M. for one had never been on board a man-of-war in her life, and so everything was doubly interesting, though nautical terms are still (and she fears ever will be) Greek to her. She and one other of the party, who shall be nameless, used from time to time secretly to compare notes as to which part of the vessel was alluded to when the triatic stay, or balloon stay-sail, or the spinnaker was mentioned, but as they were both equally ignorant it was not much good, so they learnt to look wise and keep silent, till by some lucky chance the interpretation was revealed.

We went to some private theatricals given by T.R.H. the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, soon after we arrived at Malta, and enjoyed them very much. One of the pieces, called 'The Practical Man,' was particularly amusing, and the principal part was acted to perfection by one of the officers,

who kept his audience in fits of laughter during the whole performance. The time-honoured piece of 'Bombastes Furioso' came next, and then supper, followed by the drive and row home in the brilliant moonlight.

At the New Year there had been a most splendid Christmas Tree entertainment, given by the Duke to everyone in Malta who had ever served with him, and it was still the topic of conversation when we came. Each person returned with a really beautiful present, and more than ever delighted by the open-handed hospitality and thoughtful kindness of their royal hosts, which have won such golden opinions and universal popularity from the inhabitants of Malta.

Returning from the theatricals, as we went down the steep steps of the quay, C. felt a sharp pain in her knee, which increased to such severe inflammation in a day or two, that she was laid up for

several weeks and unable to move. It was, however, fortunate that it should have happened at Malta, where we were within reach of good doctors, and where there were plenty of friends who came to see her.





## CHAPTER XIII.

### HAGIAR KHEM.



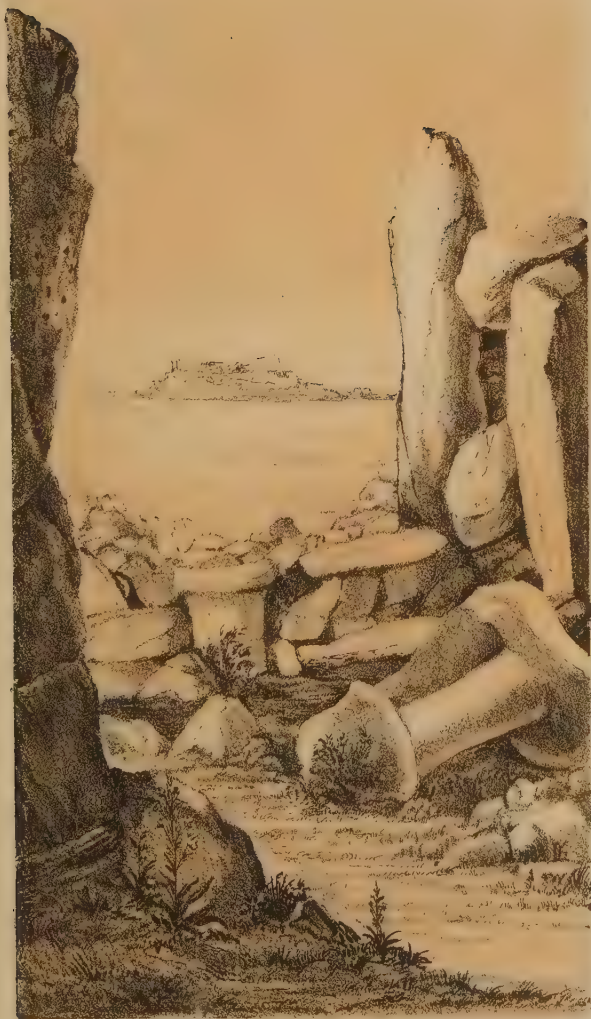
ONE expedition we made, was to see the Phœnician remains on the other side of the island—a drive of some miles.

Leaving our vehicles in the road, we walked across some very stony and arid ground, with here and there a patch of a handsome and tall kind of clover, now in full flower, and in about a quarter-of-an-hour arrived at the Temple of Hagiar Khem; it covers a considerable extent of ground, and is wonderfully perfect, particularly when one considers its extraor-

dinary antiquity, for it appears tolerably certain that it dates from the year 1500 B.C.

The stones of which it is built are of cyclopean size, and the walls are still so perfect that the plan of the building remains intact, and if drawn, it would present rather the appearance of a hand with the fingers extended. Each of these fingers seems to have been a sort of chapel, and several retain their little round stone altars in perfect preservation, and in them were found the hideous little effigies of the Children of the Sun, called the Kabiri, which we had seen in the museum at Valetta; over some of the door-ways the huge stone lintels actually remain, and in their sides we saw the holes in which the door-posts and hinges were fixed.

Many of the stones were at least twenty feet long and massive in proportion, and the thought came to us, as it always does when viewing such marvellous relics of



HANHART IMP

HAGIAR KHEM, MALTA.





antiquity, what appliances could have been known in those remote days to enable such huge blocks of stone to be moved, and lifted into their places? Had the builders mechanical knowledge forgotten in later times, or did they use nothing but brute force, and effect their purpose by merely the strength of numbers?

About a mile from Hagiar Khem is another similar temple, that of Mnaidra, which is in still better preservation, and nothing struck us as more wonderful than to see the little altars, erected more than three thousand years ago in honour of the great Sun-God, actually remaining *in situ*.

Mnaidra stands close to, but at a considerable elevation above, the sea: a beautiful site, and M. did not lose the opportunity of making a sketch of the massive stones standing up grey against the clear sky, with a brilliant foreground of purple vetch, and beyond, the little rocky island of Filfla floating in the sparkling blue sea. This

islet has a rough time of it, for, being uninhabited and standing well out from the coast, it is used as a target by our men-of-war, who expend much powder and shot battering it with their heavy guns, for practice.

Our antiquarian enthusiasm and artistic zeal were not strong enough to prevent our feeling great cravings for luncheon by the time we had explored Mnaidra; so, amidst the ruins of a by-gone age, we sat down and much enjoyed our cold chicken and claret, to the edification of a circle of admiring natives.

These natives, men, women, and children, were positively insufferable, and went far towards spoiling the pleasure of the day. From the moment we left the carriages until we returned to them, they surrounded us, begging incessantly, and their dirt and their whining entreaties in broken English were most annoying. They did not look in actual want, and one of our party on this

expedition who was kindly acting as our cicerone, and who spoke of Malta and its people with the knowledge gained by years of official experience, assured us that there was little or no real poverty in the island.

There is *no* direct taxation : the population only contribute to the revenue indirectly, there being a tax on corn, and are scarcely aware that they do so. They live in the most inexpensive manner, their principal meal consisting of a three-pound loaf, in which they scoop a hole which they fill with green oil, and into this oil they sometimes put a fish, and wash it down with black, country-wine.

There is scarcely any spot on the face of the globe so thickly populated in proportion to its size as Malta, but the inhabitants have all fair means of obtaining a livelihood, either by cultivating the soil, or in and about Valetta. Eight thousand men get their living in harbour-work, *i.e.*, as coal shippers, long-shore-men, Dhjaiso-

men, and so on, which, it is calculated, brings up the total number of individuals thus supported to forty thousand !

The country is sub-divided by stone walls into an infinite number of small enclosures, which give a very barren appearance to the landscape, the crops being completely concealed from view ; one can see nothing but the walls which are necessary as shelter from the winds that, without them, would blow away not only the vegetation, but the actual soil that thinly covers the rock, and much of which has been imported from Sicily. The monotony of these perpetual walls is, however, broken by numbers of square windowless towers, the use of which was for some time a puzzle to us, but which we found were used by the people as shelter whilst watching over their farms and gardens.

That evening we went to the opera, but neither the music nor the performers were much to be commended. On a subsequent

occasion, however, when we went with Admiral Ward to hear the 'Rigoletto,' it was a different company, and both singing and acting were excellent.

But there were days of shadow, as well as of brightness.

Odd-job day! Our hearts sink as we think of it, but yet thus it had to be. We always put it off till our gowns became masses of expedients, and safety-pins did duty for ribbons and buttons.

M. had the misfortune to possess an irremediable (not irreproachable) white waistcoat, which required pipeclay, and periodically she retired to her cabin and was invisible for a time while she was employed in making black white, and sneezing over the operation. E., after lamenting a long time, finally hid herself away with an empty bottle and an offending stocking over which by an ingenious arrangement it was darned, and after some time she re-emerged smiling and

radiant, saying, ' My stocking is mended !'

Holes seemed to come without provocation; important strings detached themselves without note of warning; elastics undid, or overstretched out of pure perversity, stockings and gloves wore out in a day. If it had not been for T., when at the last gasp, what we should have done I know not, but she would come to the rescue with her wonted kindness, and, what is more, with her skilful needle.





## CHAPTER XIV.

### ‘FLOATING FORTRESSES.’



DD-job day had, however, some incidents more worthy of note than mending and patching ; witness one day when instead of fulfilling our appointed tasks we accepted an invitation from Admiral Ward to go and see the great hydraulic crane at work in the dock-yard. There are only two others of equal size and power in existence, and Italy has possession of them both.

This gigantic machine can lift one hundred and sixty tons weight, and moves



with such ease and facility that it seems as if a child could direct it.

The object to be raised on this occasion was a torpedo boat of sixty-two tons, which it lifted out of the water as if it were a feather, so easily and noiselessly did it move, and then, turning it round to its appointed place, it gently deposited it on the beams prepared for its reception.

These torpedo boats are wicked, venomous-looking little creatures, and it makes one shiver to think that, when at sea, thirteen or fourteen men live practically submerged within them.

A few years ago, when several of these boats left England to cross the Bay, Admiral Ward told us his anxiety was very great, and when the officers came to bid him Goodbye, he half doubted if he should ever see them alive again. And a rough time indeed must they have had of it, but with true English pluck they got through

it somehow, and are now ready to make light of it, and go again if need be.

Talking about torpedos, the really marvellous thing to see is H.M.S. 'Polyphemus,' which, at the invitation of Captain Gallwey, we went aboard one morning, and he very kindly showed us over this extraordinary specimen of naval architecture.

She is described in the Navy-list as 'a steel torpedo ram of two thousand six hundred and forty tons,' and was first commissioned in February, 1882, but up to now has no competitor afloat. She carries no big guns, her fighting qualifications consisting in the strength of her construction, the numerous torpedos she carries, and last, but not least, in her speed.

All the super-structure is amidships, the fore-part of her deck, when at sea, being completely submerged, and we were shown a photograph of her taken when under way in fine weather, in which the

great wave caused by her rapid motion through the water, completely curls over it as high as the fighting tower. When at sea, the only air that they have to breathe below is what is nick-named 'tinned,' *i.e.*, artificially pumped down, but the officers assured us that the atmosphere thus produced was perfectly fresh and pure.

The captain's cabin and ward-room are necessarily very small, though comfortable and fairly lofty, but the officers' sleeping-berths appeared to be very cramped, while the hatchways and doors are so narrow that the arm-chair in the captain's cabin was *built into the ship*, as there would have been no way of getting it into its place after she had been decked.

The 'Polyphemus' is entirely lighted by electricity, for generating which, there are two small engines, so that if one should happen to break down they may not be left in darkness.

The principal torpedo chamber is for-

ward, where we saw several of these ‘infernal machines’ in position for discharging, and more in another compartment abaft of this one. Here also is the engine for charging them with the compressed air which works their own miniature engines: one of these beautiful little machines we saw in a section of a torpedo which was under repair, and another was set in motion (*in situ*, of course) for our benefit. We forget the exact number of revolutions, but to see the little screw-propellor whirling round was a wonder in itself.

Although we thought we understood the explanations given us at the time, we are too ignorant of mechanics to venture to describe *how* these marvellous things work, but by a most ingenious arrangement they are so regulated that they proceed in a straight line at any given depth under the water, and when their course is done, either float or sink as required, while another

most clever 'dodge' ensures them from exploding too soon, and thus endangering the safety of the vessel.

The captain from the fighting tower can fight the ship, steer the ship, in short do everything himself : no torpedo can be fired without his communicating the order by telegraph and receiving the reply, and he can thus personally regulate every single operation of any importance which has to be performed, including one which is quite peculiar to this most peculiar ship.

Suspended along the length of her keel are a number of huge pieces of lead ballast each weighing twenty tons, which the captain, by a secret contrivance, can separately detach and thus gradually lighten the vessel in the event of her receiving a shot, or damage from any other cause, below the line of her normal flotation : one at a time can be let go, or all, and of course the result would be to raise her immensely, and thus enable her to keep afloat when

injured between wind and water. The apparatus for doing this is kept under lock and key, and explained to no one. Should the fighting tower be shot away, as it might very well be, there are all the same arrangements below, in another compartment, to which the commanding officer could transfer himself.

The 'Polyphemus' has several Hotchkiss guns, which are being brought to great perfection. One man can fire this beautiful little weapon as easily as if it were a rifle, yet it can penetrate a ship's armour; there is a stock to put to the shoulder, you can take aim as with a rifle and pull the trigger with your finger, while the recoil is so managed as to compress the gun into the carriage instead of bringing it back upon the gunner.

The 'Polly' is certainly a surprising specimen of science and invention, but her best friends could not call her beautiful; she is a hideous monster, but does her best

to conceal her charms from the vulgar gaze by painting herself a dull grey, all over.

This invisibility is indeed one of her great merits, as was proved during the blockade of the Piræus a year ago, when a French man-of-war, apparently with no motive but swagger, attempted to sail through the combined fleets without showing her colours.

She was hailed by more than one ship, but took no notice, and succeeded in passing them out of range, or before they could resolve to give her a shot, and flattered herself that she had run the blockade triumphantly, when suddenly she found herself close to the 'Polyphemus' which she had approached without perceiving; she paid no attention to the first summons, when the British captain repeated it with the additional remark that if she did not hoist her colours within five minutes he would fire into her; and the story goes that he stood by the gun, watch in hand, where

the Frenchman could see him, who there-upon ate humble-pie, and did as he was bid, knowing well the speed and power of the beauty he had to deal with!

The '*Polyphemus*' carries two steam-launches on board, but can hoist very few boats, for which life-rafts are substituted, these serving as bridges between the detached parts of her super-structure; four-and-a-half minutes suffice to get the whole ship's company safe out of her on to these rafts.

At the risk of being prosy, we have dilated on this floating fortress (or box of machinery) which it is to be feared is of a type that is likely to supersede the ideal man-of-war to a great extent, though one cannot but regret this when one sees the noble '*Téméraire*' or the '*Superb*,' both of which also lay close to us, or when one remembers the graceful frigates and magnificent line-of-battle ships of a few years ago, Old England's wooden walls, of which alas! so few remain.



Perhaps if, as seems likely, the artillery of the future wins the race against armour, making it impossible for any vessel to carry effectual protection on her sides and yet keep afloat, we may return to wooden ships, who knows? but the sailing beauty we shall see no more. Of these there is one specimen at Malta, the Admiral-superintendent's flag-ship 'Hibernia,' now stripped to a hulk, but celebrated for having made the fastest recorded passage under canvas from England, taking only six-and-a-half days to do the distance!

The 'Superb' was also very kind and hospitable to us, and we went all over her 'five stories' upper, main, and lower decks, the 'Flats,' (or what used to be called the orlop deck), and the hold.

Her accommodation is a singular contrast to that of the 'Polyphemus,' and superior to that of any of the many ships we know or have known. The Commander gave us a most excellent and sumptuous luncheon,

with all sorts of pretty little additions, such as a lovely little bouquet by each plate and pale sweet violets strewn in the finger-glasses; this, of course, was in the ward-room, which is very large and lofty, far more so than many so-called spacious rooms on shore, and all the other cabins we saw were in proportion.

The 'Superb' carries a broad-side battery amidships of twelve 18-ton guns, which is protected fore and aft by water-tight iron bulkheads. Only this portion of the ship is armoured, but she has several of these water-tight compartments, and one, right forward, would enable ten or twelve feet of her bows to be shot or rammed away without the ship's safety being endangered.

We were rather amused at one specimen of the inventive genius of some cautious individual, namely, a succession of round iron plates to be screwed over shot-holes: a big one for a big hole, a lesser one for a lesser hole, and a little one for a little

hole, reminding one of Sir Isaac Newton and his cat and kitten holes !

The 'Superb' is ship-rigged with very lofty masts and heavy spars, but her performances under sail without some assistance from her steam-power would probably be far from satisfactory. When we visited her she was within a few days of her departure home, and sported a magnificent paying-off pennant with a gilt ball at the end, which floated in the water many yards away when there was not enough wind to stream it out.

We were still at Malta when she left for England, and her departure was a fine sight: she had evidently been a very popular ship, and all the Fleet was anxious to do her honour.

Punctually at the hour named for her to weigh, a white-clad seaman appeared at each yard-arm, not only of the 'Superb' herself, but of her beautiful neighbour, the 'Téméraire,' and one at each mast-head; the

men swarmed up the rigging of all such ships as possessed any, the bands struck up 'Auld Lang Syne,' and cheer after cheer rang out to wish the noble vessel 'Farewell and God-speed,' as slowly and majestically she moved from her moorings.

E. had seen so many ships *leave* home, that she felt rather hard-hearted amid the general excitement, yet even she must acknowledge that, after all, the thought that the ship was *homeward* bound, and that the natural regret of those on board her at the parting from friends of several long years standing must be more than counter-balanced by the prospect of soon being in Old England and among their own kith and kin, could not prevent the spectacle from being a moving one, as she glided along at a very slow speed, apparently anxious to retard the moment of her final departure as long as possible.

'Ariadne' did her best to join in 'the parting tribute of respect,' and caps were lifted

and handkerchiefs waved by those on board her to any of their friends who stood on the 'Superb's' poop or bridge, while the yachtsmen gave her a cheer from the fore-rigging.

After the great ship had disappeared behind Isola Point, we could still see her men on the mast-heads and yard-arms, the one on the fore-truck making himself especially noticeable by frantically waving his cap in one hand and a flag in the other, regardless of his, to a landsman's eye, most perilous position. When the beautiful taper spars had in their turn vanished from sight, we could still, for some minutes, see the gold ball at the end of the pennant streaming out into the air, a last signal of Farewell!

This not being a history of the British Navy, we must not weary our readers by giving them lengthy descriptions of the other ships we visited, and on board of which we met with so much hospitality

and kindness, yet we can hardly leave some among them unnoticed.

There was the 'Thunderer,' no longer in her *première jeunesse*, but still a most formidable type of the 'flat-iron;' and the 'Colossus,' one of the last commissioned of our iron-clads, with all the newest inventions for offence and defence. She carries 45-ton guns in her turrets, which one man, by the aid of hydraulic machinery, can train, raise, and depress. They are breech-loaders, and the process of loading and afterwards screwing up the breech piece is also done by hydraulic power, and by the same means the turret itself is made to revolve with the greatest ease.

On the top of the turret is a little gun, a mere baby, which is trained with it, and follows exactly the movements of its great friend below, so that practice can be made with it; a good notion for saving expense. One shot from the big gun costs

about eighty pounds, as against a few shillings from the baby.

The 'Colossus' carries other guns of smaller calibre, fore and aft of the turrets; and of course several of the little Hotchkiss, which are provided with a very ingenious electric sight for night practice.

Most of her officers' accommodation being contained in the superstructure (which runs the whole length of her) it is very airy and roomy, but I should think too hot to be pleasant when her big guns are being fired. She is far from pleasing to the eye, and the 'Téméraire' was undoubtedly the beauty of the fleet, with her towering masts and immense spars.





## CHAPTER XV.

### THE WORLD'S GIRDLE.



SOON after our arrival in Malta, we made a very pleasant expedition with some friends to Città Vecchia, or Notabile, the capital of L'Isle Adam when the Knights of St. John came from Rhodes to Malta.

It is a very interesting old town, in fact it may almost be called a city of deserted palaces, for you hardly meet a soul in the streets, and a look of departed grandeur pervades the whole place. On a subse-



quent occasion, when E. and M. went back to have a quiet look at it, we ate our luncheon on a doorstep without exciting any notice or surprise.

We went by train on the first occasion, and a primitive train it was ! It started in a tunnel, and creeping along through the fortifications waddled up the grass-grown incline towards Notabile at about the pace of a brisk walk.

An incident of frequent occurrence in the early morning, and quite in character with the rest of the performance, is the fact that the headlong course of this very limited mail is often checked, and even sometimes brought to a total standstill, by the passage of innumerable fat snails over the line, who, I cannot help thinking, must take it for their own particular snail-shell and try to get into it.

We found Dr. Vassallo waiting to meet us at the station, and he very kindly ciceroned us to all the places worth seeing,

which greatly added to the interest, as he knew the history of each thing and explained them to us as we went along.

The cathedral, without being very fine in itself, is still full of beautiful things which in former days belonged to the Knights, and before that arch-robber Napoleon came to Malta, there were many more.

There are fifteen silver figures about three feet high which stand on the altar on festa days and which were special objects of his cupidity. Six of them are the work of Benvenuto Cellini, and must be of immense value. In order to retain these precious objects, the people of Città Vecchia paid down an enormous sum of money, but when Napoleon saw them he declared that the workmanship was insufficiently paid for, so they doubled the former amount and kept them.

There is a very curious and interesting old picture of St. Paul which is said to

have been brought by the Knights from Jerusalem. It is very large and of the peculiar Byzantine type of painting, though lighter in colour than most of them. Every part of it but the head, hands, and feet is covered by a silver robe, so that it looks like a great silver bas-relief, with only the head and hands appearing through holes cut for them. The face has the same solemn and majestic look which the old mosaics have, when they seem to look out of their gold backgrounds beyond and beyond into eternity, leaving this small world of the present far below them at their feet.

There is another much smaller picture of the same kind, attributed to St. Luke, and in the same chapel a beautiful little silver shrine and crucifix, of which latter we made a sketch.

The pavement of this church, as well as that of St. John's in Valetta, is very handsome, and laid in coloured marbles of great

beauty. Parts of it consist of the tombstones of the Knights, with their armorial bearings emblazoned on them.

There was one modern tablet which was a funny contrast to the others; it represented Jonah and the whale, done in coloured marbles. There was a round black rock on one side, and the whale's head on the other. Out of its mouth, which was painfully wide open, Jonah was crawling on hands and knees, his head turned back with an expression of deprecating horror, while the monster glared at him out of a fishy white eye.

We had no time to see the vestments and choir books, some of which were very fine, for we had various other things to see, to wit, the remains of a Roman villa lately brought to light and in wonderful preservation, and also the catacombs. These are very curious indeed, and differ from the Roman ones in that wherever a body has been laid, there is a round hole scooped out

for the head to lie in, and those which seem like family-places of burial are so constructed that you can walk round them and look through the open arches. There are numbers of small places, evidently for children, hollowed out of the sides of the rocky passages, so as to economise space, and little holes where the lamps were set to light these dismal abodes of the living and the dead. Except in the St. Agatha catacomb, we saw no paintings on the walls.

It was difficult walking along the very rough narrow corridors, and as we groped along in single file, each with our taper in our hand, we speedily got tired of bending our lofty heads, and pawing the air for possible steps in the dark.

We intimated to the guide our wish to return, but he was remorseless, and insisted upon our seeing everything. At last the blessed light of day was perceived through a chink, and we soon rejoined

our companions, who, having driven us into the depths of the tombs, were comfortably enjoying a cigar outside.

By this time we were becoming aware from internal sensations that it was long past luncheon-time, and we accepted with joy Dr. Vassallo's kind invitation to go to his house and have some tea, which we accordingly did; and he showed us the curiosities of all kinds which he had collected at different times, and with which he had made his house so attractive and pretty.

He has a very curious old picture of the 'Caracca of St. Anne,' the great ship of the Order of St. John, in which they came from Rhodes, with decks rising tier upon tier, fore and aft, while out of the after-cabin window peeps the head of the Grand Master looking out to sea. Dr. Vassallo allowed M. to make a little sketch of it.

Another expedition we enjoyed was to the Summer Palace of the Governor,

about two miles beyond Città Vecchia. It is a beautiful old castle, standing on a height, and surrounded by a moat, with square towers at each angle ; a charming airy situation, with a grand view of Valetta and the sea, and with a broad terrace surrounding it, from which a steep path leads down into orange-groves. It must be cool and pleasant in summer with its great lofty rooms.

It was built towards the end of the sixteenth century by the Grand Master Verdala, who gave it his own name. Many of the rooms have fresco-painted friezes, of various dates, but all extremely coarse and ugly, and the inevitable broad winding-stair leads to the upper rooms.

From Verdala we drove through Città Vecchia again, and on to Benjemma, on the coast, where there is a modern fort so cleverly built into the top of a cliff as to be almost invisible. We did not go up to it, but walked down to a spot about a

mile from the beach, where we had a very fine view of the sea and the Island of Gozo.

This was the scene, a few days before our arrival at Malta, of a sham fight on a great scale, when H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh succeeded in effecting a landing at the head of a large force of blue-jackets and stormed the heights.

On our way back we visited the curious natural grotto under St. Paul's church in Citta Vecchia, which we have already described.

One morning the Admiral Superintendent took us round to Quarantine Harbour, in a dock-yard tug, to visit a steam-ship belonging to one of the great electric telegraph companies, in which we had been invited to make an expedition to the Island of Gozo. It was, however, blowing so hard, and there was such a rough sea, that this expedition was abandoned: even in the short trip from one harbour to the other, the tug rolled and pitched consider-



ably, and there was a heavy surf breaking on the rocks.

Although we regretted not seeing Gozo, we were hardly sorry not to have done so on this occasion, as we should not then have had the opportunity of seeing over the ship and having all her beautiful and delicate machinery explained to us.

Our host first put us in charge of the captain, who was most obliging in showing us the arrangements in the ship's bows for paying out the cables, which are coiled round drums in two great wells. The machinery is very simple, and he told us that, under favourable conditions, they can now lay out the cables very rapidly without fear of breakage.

Our host then took us into the electrician's room, which was filled with a bewildering number of batteries, artificial cables, and instruments to which we could give no names, and introduced us to the chief electrician, who most kindly and

clearly proceeded to explain the use of some of his mysterious paraphernalia. Indeed so lucid were his descriptions that E. (M. was not present) really thought that even her non-scientific mind had grasped them, but alas! now she wants to transcribe them she fears she was but flattering herself, and hardly dares to do so. Yet she cannot resist mentioning one or two of these marvellous machines, even at the risk of provoking the risibility of those who are well up in such matters.

One of the most interesting was the apparatus for detecting the exact spot where a submarine cable is broken or injured. Of course the amount of the electric fluid wanted for any given length of cable is known to a nicety, and therefore what is required in testing for a breakage is to show how much less is at work. For this purpose an artificial cable of the same power as the real one is kept in the room, in which the continuity of the

electricity can be broken at any point or points by the separate removal of some pegs arranged in a frame. By an ingenious piece of mechanism connected with the working cable, a tiny mirror, the position of which depends upon the amount of electricity in operation, is made to cast a pencil of light upon a glass line or gauge, inserted in a frame.

A similar instrument is affixed to the artificial cable, which throws its indicator upon the same glass gauge. As before explained, the electric current in this artificial cable can be broken at regular intervals by the removal of pegs : one after another of these is taken out, until at last the pencil of light from the artificial, and that from the real, cable register the same, and the number of pegs removed at once gives the number of miles of unbroken cable.

The duplex telegram, now in use between England and America, was then

explained to us. This is also worked by means of an artificial cable, which is in connection with the same battery as the real one. The two messages sent from the opposite shores of the Atlantic meet and block each other: the weakest current is driven back and disports itself (until the other has reached its destination) in the artificial cable, and then flashes along the real one, the whole process being practically instantaneous.

More singular still is the telegraph from the main-land to the Isle of Wight, where, by means of powerful batteries placed at different points, the sea itself is utilized to convey our despatches without any cable at all!

We were also much interested by the account our host gave us of the history of submarine telegraphy. The first cable, laid down by H.M.S. 'Agamemnon' and the U.S.S. 'Niagara,' was a failure; the second flashed two messages, then parted; was

sought for and found, the broken ends grappled for, picked up, and then dropped again. Yet, nothing daunted by these repeated misfortunes, the directors not only resolved to make a fresh attempt to recover the lost cable (which was eventually successful), but determined there and then to send out another, for which purpose eleven out of those present at the meeting subscribed £10,000 a-piece.

Five and twenty years ago, about two thousand miles of submarine cable, valued at about £20,000, existed ; now there are at least two hundred thousand miles laid down all over the world, of the approximate value of two and a half millions sterling !

Before we left, after this most interesting morning, we were very hospitably entertained at luncheon on board the steamer, and then returned to Valetta as we came, feeling that we had learnt, or ought to have learnt, a great deal.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### A BALL ON BOARD SHIP.



O turn to a very different and more frivolous subject, we were actually invited to a ball on H.M.S. 'Dreadnought,' and, having decked ourselves out in the smartest gowns we could muster, we started about ten o'clock for our destination, which was about one hundred yards distant.

It was unluckily a very stormy night, the yacht had been rolling about a good deal, and M. had been looking forward all day to a few hours' peace on

what was as good as *terra firma*, viz., the 'Dreadnought's' deck.

But it was no easy matter getting on board in the swell, and several ladies, we were credibly informed, succumbed to seasickness between the shore and the ship. M. was not so weak-minded as that, but what with the agitation of steam-launches nearly running into one in the darkness, blue lights flashing in one's eyes, and Dhjaisos cutting in, she was not above being very thankful when they found themselves grasped by four strong arms, dragged up to the gangway, and rapidly transferred to the deck with but little volition of their own.

The ball-room, which was the upper deck, sixty feet wide, was a wonderfully pretty sight, lit with festoons of little electric lights, which gave a most brilliant and fairy-like appearance to the whole scene. We stayed till the gentlemen of our party began to look patiently dejected,

and then went back to the yacht, and crept softly to our cabins, so as to avoid waking C.

We have omitted to say anything as yet about our tea-parties, of which we had several, and which were a great amusement to us. At one of these Princess Louise honoured the 'Ariadne' with a visit, and to another, just before we went away, the Duchess of Edinburgh also came, by which time the yacht was able to decorate herself with the spoils we had accumulated during our stay at Malta. Her decks were covered with Persian carpets and rugs of all hues; brilliant mule-cloths draped the booby-hatch, binnacle, and chairs, while the British and Russian ensigns, festooned over the taffrail, concealed us from the shore, and an awning spread over the whole deck abaft the companion, with a canvas screen on the windward side, turned 'Ariadne's' deck into as pretty a drawing-room as one could wish to see.



About this time we parted from one of our shipmates, Mr. W., who was obliged to return home for Easter. It was with much regret that we wished him 'Good-bye,' and saw him on board the steamer for Naples, with every prospect, too, of a bad passage (a prospect which we were sorry afterwards to hear was fully realised). He proposed paying his first visit to Rome, *en route* to England, but could only spare two days for the purpose, and was anxious to be told what he had better see. Of course we all volunteered our advice, and, if he followed it, he must have commenced sight-seeing each day at sunrise, and continued it until mid-night, without even then seeing half of what he was told it was absolutely necessary he *should* see, and must have departed from the Eternal City in the last stage of exhaustion.

We wish he were at our side to contribute to this—our great work—for he visited several places at Malta which we

did not, and, with his usual kindness, would, we are sure, allow us to make use of his information; for instance, he went to St. Paul's Bay, which we foolishly neglected to do, and were very sorry for it afterwards; and, on another occasion, he took a long walk in Vittorioso, which we never did. On this occasion he brought back the following copy of an epitaph in the naval cemetery there, which, we hope, we shall hurt nobody's feelings by transcribing:

' He as gone the span is broken  
A long and a last goodbye  
True as death is love's token  
Swells the heart and fills the eyes  
Then we gather not to ponder  
And our minds we will not squander  
In this world down here below.'

E. took a walk in Isola one day, and went into the elegant little watch tower which overhangs the sea, and on the four different sides of which are carved an eye, an ear, a fleur-de-lys, and a stork or crane,

with the following inscription over the entrance door :

‘Portubus hic tribus una et pluribus  
arcibus adstans. Dum vigilo excubiis  
omnia tuta manent. MDC. XCI.’

This was the afternoon of Mr. W.’s departure, and from the watch tower E. could see his steam-packet in the far distance beginning to pitch in an ominous manner. The view over the harbour and towns was very fine and striking.

Before we quitted Malta, we found ourselves left with very few companions in the harbour. The Commander-in-Chief sailed, with several ships of the fleet, to meet Her Majesty at Cannes, and the ‘Polyphemus’ departed for Cephalonia. We followed them some way in the steam-launch, and certainly, ugly as they are, the ‘flat-irons’ do look imposing and formidable, and we felt glad that the Queen was to be welcomed in a foreign country by her own powerful ships.

The 'Surprise' went off on a few days' cruise with the Duchess of Edinburgh on board, and the 'Alexandra,' having just completed her refit, soon followed to rejoin the rest of the squadron, Princess Louise and Lord Lorne taking a passage to Naples in her.

We went on board the 'Téméraire,' when she and the other remaining ships saluted and manned yards as the Princess left the shore, and a fine sight it was.

Finally we weighed anchor and departed ourselves, but a few hours before we did so, we were joined by Mr. K., who had arrived from England in the night by the Naples steamer.





## CHAPTER XVII.

### GOOD-BYE TO MALTA.

**H**AVING been more than a month at Malta we were, in some ways, glad to be off, but still we left it with great regret, having thoroughly enjoyed our stay. We had met with much kindness and hospitality from friends afloat and ashore, and there is so much to be done and seen that, far from having exhausted the resources of the island, we felt we had left many places unvisited, even in Valetta itself, which would have interested us and that one would never tire (except physically—oh!

those stairs on a hot day when one was in a hurry!) of the picturesque streets with their endless flights of steps, or of those which, crossing the Strada Reale at right angles, have a vista of blue sea at either end, and every house in which is a palace, with beautiful, carved, over-hanging balconies.

The women all wear the *faldetta* or black silk head-dress peculiar to Malta, and which we did not admire. It looks as if it had once been an apron, being gathered in on one side, completely conceals the features except when the wearer is facing you, and falls over the shoulders; having apparently no fastening whatever, one hand is always occupied in holding this garment on, which, in a high wind, looks very awkward.

A story goes that the wearing of this head-gear was imposed on the Maltese by the Pope as a penance, after the French occupation of the island; not having shown

a strong enough objection to receiving salutes from the gallant Gauls, the ladies were condemned to wear this black armour, which would certainly make such attentions impossible.

As far as we saw, these hoods concealed remarkably plain faces ; we scarcely saw a pretty woman in the place, but the men are rather good-looking than otherwise, short, but very sturdy, with curly black hair and all exactly alike ; they generally wear a blue cap, half-Scotch, half-sailor in shape, no jacket, and a sash round their waists.

They appeared to be very hard-working, and the way they manage their Djhaisos (or shore-boats) is wonderful, steering them among the crowds of craft in the harbour with the greatest skill, though why they should go ahead at all is a mystery, as they put the blades of their oars into the water almost flat with the surface. They paddle standing and facing forward so as to see

their way about, and at night always carry a light, the effect of which is very pretty, the water being covered with these little fire-flies flitting about.

The Djhaiso—pronounced Dyso—has a high stem at both ends, rather like a gondola, though there is no other resemblance between the two, and is a useful, handy sort of boat, while the fares are not ruinous, being at the rate of three-pence for nearly everywhere; while on shore, a fly will take you anywhere in the town for the same price. They drive capital, strong little Barbs, which are sometimes very good-looking, with good action, and are usually in excellent condition and well used; they are given barley and a peculiar sort of long grass, besides the vetch, of which there is so much grown in the island, but get no oats.

We saw some really beautiful ponies, either in harness or being ridden by officers of the garrison and ladies, and they



do well for polo, but we were told they are not worth the expense of transportation to England, being rarely quite sound, and not fast for any distance. English ponies are not allowed to be entered for the races, the Maltese having no chance against them.

There seems to be plenty of trade carried on : large cargo steamers were continually going in and out, and of course any number of colliers, there being an enormous coal dépôt at the head of the Grand Harbour, where, besides the numerous full warehouses, hundreds of barges are kept ready loaded for the use both of the navy and of the merchant service. Wheat too, sufficient for three years' consumption, is kept in the store-granaries which undermine Valetta, so that the island appears always prepared for a siege.





## CHAPTER XVIII.

### CLASSIC GROUND.



WE were fortunate in getting a friendly tow to our destination, the Ionian Islands, fortunate, that is to say, inasmuch as it enabled us to carry out the original programme of the cruise.

The unavoidable delay at Malta would have made the possibility of our proceeding under sail doubtful, as the remaining time at our disposal would not allow of delays occasioned by head winds or calms, and we therefore rejoiced at the chance, but oh! we rejoiced at nothing else!

What a time we did have of it, to be sure; there was a head wind and sea,—it blew very hard, and really there was no antic a yacht could perform, in which 'Ariadne' did not indulge herself.

Everything possible was done to steady her; the jibboom was got in, the boats and anchors stowed on board, and the fore-sail kept on her, but made fast fore and aft. All that night and most of the following day did 'Ariadne' kick, jump, rear, shake, roll her scuppers under water,—there was nothing imaginable of the kind she did *not* do,—whilst the panelling of the cabins grated and squeaked (some of it being permanently loosened), and the ship groaned and lamented herself till the noise was quite deafening. Had not our friend been most considerate, and moderated his speed for our benefit, we could not have held on in such weather, though casting-off would have been rather a ticklish business. Even the good sailors, including

most of the crew, confessed to feeling very uncomfortable ; what then can be said of the bad ones !

Happily the weather moderated the evening of the day after our departure, and by the second morning the sea had greatly gone down, the ship was comparatively quiet, and we were able to proceed more rapidly.

After this, matters steadily improved, and by the time we cast off, off Cephalonia, the weather was lovely and the sea smooth ; but ‘Ariadne’ was sulky to the last, and could not even then reconcile herself to the indignity of being towed with anything like equanimity. The instant she found herself her own mistress once more, she recovered her temper, and treated us to one of the most delicious sails we ever had.

We parted company with our kind friend with all the expressions of gratitude which could be expressed by signal or

chalked on black boards, and made sail for Ithaca round the north coast of Cephalonia.

By sunset we were off the entrance to the little harbour of Vathy, in the Island of Ithaca—our destination—but now the wind dropped completely, and the boats had to tow us in, so that we did not come to an anchor until past eleven o'clock. Vathy is completely land-locked, and nothing could be more dreamy and delightful than slowly gliding up the narrow inlet (not unlike the entrance to some of the small Devon and Cornish harbours), a glorious full moon shining down on us, leaving the hills in a dim and shadowy darkness, while its beams sparkled on the still waters. The sunset, too, had been a most lovely sight, and the mountains of Greece had taken every hue conceivable, black, violet, delicate pink, and grey in the ever-varying light. This evening was indeed a striking contrast to the two last we had spent.

When we went on deck next morning, with our minds full of Odyssean fervour, we found that daylight had somewhat dispelled the poetry of the scene.

The hills are low and uninteresting, with an enormous windmill perched on the top of each, and there is a matter-of-fact look about the whole place, which requires all the accessories of moonlight, &c., to come up to one's preconceived ideas.

I feel that I am treading on dangerous ground in speaking thus lightly of Ithaca, for one of our party loves it, and will not hear a word said in its disfavour—so much so, that we fully expect ere long to hear that she has quitted home and friends for ever and settled in 'low lying Ithaca' to reign supreme over Vathyan society.

One evening when the moon was certainly doing her best and flooding the little bay with light, so that even the county gaol assumed an unnatural beauty

in its rays, we saw for the first time a lunar rainbow. It was perfectly distinct, but much fainter than a solar one, and not more than a quarter of the circle above the horizon; the colours were only dimly perceptible, but still it was a very curious thing to see. Whether it was a sign of bad weather or not I do not know, but the next day it poured with a will, and we stayed at home all the morning, till E., prompted by that intense desire 'to get a little air' which specially manifests itself on rainy days, went off with Mr. K. for a walk.

The friend before alluded to as having taken Ithaca under her special protection having had a description of its appearance the morning after our arrival imparted to her, appears to be so much hurt thereby, that as a balm to her wounded feelings E. feels proud to mention that she and Mr. K. returned from this walk delighted, not only with the 'air,' which, as the rain had

stopped, was of the freshest and sweetest, but with the scenery.

They took a winding road, which led them over the hill to the outer shore of the island, and then walked along a path close to the water's edge—a beautiful smooth gravelled path, below which the blue transparent water shone in the sunlight, while the barren (that objectionable word *must* again be used) promontory stood up dark against the glorious Greek mountains, and all around them grew beautiful pink cistus, yellow broom, asphodel, and lovely fresh young ferns. They came back enchanted, and laden with flowers.

Meanwhile, F. had dragged out unwilling M., and they strolled about in the wet, and finally found themselves at the little Greek church on the side of the hill, where it was strange to see English tombstones in the churchyard, all that now remains of the English occupation but the cordial feelings with which the people



regard any English who chance to visit the island.

The Greek 'papa,' looking very venerable with his high beretta, long grey beard, and loose flowing robe, met us at the door, and showed us the inside. It was rather pretty, with its bright row of pictures across the icon or screen which shuts off the sanctuary from the body of the church, and it was curious to see that these pictures, which were mostly painted by a native artist, were exactly like the old Byzantine type of stiff figures on gold backgrounds, only needing the mellowing effect of time to become precisely similar.

The old papa gave us so distinctly to understand that he wished to come and call on Mr. K. that M. said she was sure he would be delighted to see him.

'How could you be so rash?' said F., in whose mind vivid recollections of visits on board during former cruises still lingered.

It was not long before she felt the force

of the remark. The appointed hour arrived next day. C. absolutely refused to leave her cabin ; all the others backed out of it ; so Mr. K. and M. were left to their own resources, and right manfully they came to the front. ‘*They*’ (not *he*) ‘are come,’ was passed down the companion ; and as M. went on deck she perceived with horror a sea of heads coming up the accommodation ladder. In a moment Mr. K. came up, and received the kiss of peace from the lips of the papa with fortitude, if not *empressement*. Then various introductions took place.

‘My son, Spiridion—my son, Theodorus,—the son of the late bishop,’ waving his hand to a shady-looking individual with a red beard and a drab coat ; ‘his father died three months ago,’ and we looked at the interesting orphan with sympathy—‘the professor of the University of—Vathy.’ Another wave of the hand included the rest of the company, and the

papa sat himself down. 'I have twelve sons,' he continued—'the twelve Apostles, and I the Christ,' and he patted his chest. (Though he meant no irreverence, it certainly sounded strange!)

We then proceeded to entertain our guests to the best of our power, though the conversation was somewhat one-sided. We gave them tea plums, and bon-bons, which latter met with the approval of Spiridion and Theodorus, and we prolonged the pleasures of the table for some time. As we took them below, the papa espied a pair of opera-glasses, and simply asked Mr. K. for them. He gently turned the subject, and we proceeded to show them the cabins. 'Ah!' said he, as he saw the piano, 'for the women.' But one of the others less contemptuously asked to be played to. The stove, too, in the main-cabin excited much interest, and was well examined. Then we returned on deck, hoping that the moment for departure had

arrived. C. was longing to emerge from her cabin, and M. went to report progress, such as it was; but no one thought of going, and again the papa returned to the opera-glasses this time with more confidence. We told him we regretted it was impossible. He knew better.

‘You can get others,’ he said, ‘I can’t.’

We resisted as long as we could, but at last he grew so very persistent, and we grew so very weary of the prolonged duration of his visit, that we promised to get him a pair in Venice, and send them to him. Some time was spent in writing down his full name and address, and then he finally entered his boat, seized the rudder, and calling out, in English, ‘I am Peter,’ as he sat in the stern, his sons rowed him ashore, leaving us in peace, as we *thought*.

They say that as long as one wreath of snow lingers forgotten under the shelter of some hedge or rock protected from the

sun, so long is there a probability that the snowstorm will return.

The son of the late bishop and the professor still lingered, forgotten, on the deck. Cruel fate ! Having dashed into C.'s cabin, to administer comfort and hope, a murmur of strange voices was heard overhead.

'Haul up the steps,' called out C., in desperation ; ' I can stand it no longer.'

It was too late. Napoleon stepped on board, accompanied by his sisters and his cousins, and his uncles and his aunts, and, as M. emerged, she found E., Mr. K. and F. struggling with a fresh crowd, and shaking hands with every single individual had to be gone through.

What could we do ? We expatiated on the weakness and debility of the signora below (the knee stood us in good stead), and just after having said it was quite impossible to disturb her by going downstairs, to our dismay, there was F. saying there was no objection whatever ! but we

smoothed over this indiscretion, and, having hinted gently, then broadly, and then plainly, that we wished to go on shore, we managed, after a long time, to get rid of our amiable guests, and as the last boat-load disappeared from sight, we jumped for joy, and sprang into the dingey to go for a walk. As we neared the shore, we saw a black mass waiting on the quay. Horror! And we fled back to the yacht with precipitation, only returning when the coast was clear.

When we did at last effect a landing, we captured a boy to show us the way, and proceeded in search of the cave in which the Phœacians deposited Ulysses after bringing him home to Ithaca in their ship, the same ship which was afterwards transformed into a rock by Poseidon close to their own Island of Scheria (Corfu).

It was a long scramble up the steep and rocky side of the mountain, and over the stone walls which divide the tiny patches

of cultivated ground, and until we were close to the cave, there were no signs to be seen of it, and we began to mistrust our guide—or rather our guides—for the juvenile population of Vathy had volunteered in numbers to escort us. Suddenly, however, we came upon the narrow entrance through which there is barely room to pass, and which it would be easy to miss among the masses of stone and rock piled all round. It is a fine, large, lofty grotto with a high vaulted roof, and the floor is at a considerable depth below the entrance.

‘——— hard by is a pleasant cave and a shady, sacred to the nymphs called the Naiads . . . And there are great looms of stone, whereon the nymphs weave raiment of a purple stain, a marvel to behold . . . and there are two gates to the cave, the one set toward the north wind, whereby men go down, but the portals toward the south pertain rather to the gods, whereby

men may not enter: it is the way of the immortals.\*

To read this, and then to visit the cave, made one really realise that one was treading classic soil, and that in the far-off ages, when the world was young, the immortal poet who sang the woes and adventures of the 'patient goodly Odysseus' and 'wise Penelope,' with her troublesome suitors, had indeed been here, and actually seen what he describes. There was the gate for men, by which we entered, and there—over our heads—was that for the immortals, and through this the rays of the sun cast a 'purple stain' on the stalactites which hung from the roof in folds, giving them the exact appearance of linen drapery. The effect was beautiful and singular, and it did not require a very lively or poetical imagination to picture to oneself the fair naiads weaving their delicate purple-

\* The 'Odyssey' of Homer, done into English prose by S. H. BUTCHER, M.A., and A. LANG, M.A.



hued raiment with their looms of stone.

The rolling stones and sharp-pointed rocks made the descent of the mountain less pleasant than the ascent, but we had a lovely view to comfort us ; (one of the party had taken the opportunity to put on thin shoes, and so needed comfort). 'Ariadne' looked quite small as she lay in the calm little harbour, while, over the hills which enclose it, we could see the bright blue sea, and other islands floating on it, backed by the snow-clad Grecian mountains.

Our juvenile escort were very amusing—bringing us flowers and repeating their English names after us, picking them up with great quickness, so that the air resounded with shouts of 'Asphodel,' 'May,' 'Ferns,' &c., and with their ringing laughter. They were nice boys, with very good manners, but we should have liked them better if they had not all been dining on garlic.

We were sorry to leave the hilly little island which Homer persistently calls 'low-lying' (contrasting it, we presume, with the Grecian mountains under whose shadow it lies), with all its classic memories and present simplicity; it seems almost as completely apart from this nineteenth century of ours, as it was when Odysseus ruled over it; the only evidence of modern progress was that the 'hollow ship' which daily visited it, was filled up by an engine, being an ugly, dirty little steamer which carried the mails to Argostoli in Cephalonia.

However, we could not linger, having yet much of our projected cruise before us, and accordingly weighed anchor one morning and sailed out of pretty, land-locked little Vathy with a fair, though light wind; this soon failed us, and we made but little progress that day, but no one felt disposed to grumble at having to spend a few hours rippling softly through the still waters of

the channel between the island of Cephalonia and St. Maura (which, though most maps call it an island also, is really connected with the coast of Greece by a very narrow strip of land), the snow-capped tops of the glorious Greek mountains sparkling in the sun-light. There was a splendid crimson sunset that evening, and then the colours of these mountains were simply indescribable.

Just at this time we had a little excitement at the sight of a long, three-masted screw-steamer creeping along under the Cephalonian shore, apparently bound in the same direction that we were. There is always something very pleasing, almost touching, in the stir created on board an English vessel at sea by the sight of another bearing the British ensign, which we soon made out that this one did; and although we could not say with Moore that

‘ O’er the silent seas alone  
For days and nights we’d cheerless gone,’

yet there was quite a muster of 'all hands' on deck, before the mast as well as abaft, to scrutinize the stranger and offer opinions as to what she might be. Soon with our spy-glasses we recognised not only the white ensign but the royal squadron burgee; the 'Ariadne' promptly ran up her ensign and number, and the other vessel doing the same introduced herself as the 'Cuhona,' and then proceeded to demonstrate that a steam yacht *sometimes* has its advantages, (though we are slow to acknowledge them), by making rapid way through the glassy sea and vanishing in the ruddy light ahead of us, steaming, as it appeared, right *into* the fiery ball which was now touching the line of the horizon. Soon the 'Cuhona' and the sun had both disappeared, darkness fell with scarcely any interval of twilight, and poetry faded into prose as we went below to dinner.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### CORFU AND AVLONA BAY.

**W**E got to Corfu about the middle of the following day, which was grey and showery ; so that our first view of the Queen of the Ionian Islands did not come up to our expectations. We both held our peace at the time, but afterwards mutually confessed to having felt much disappointment. This only shows the fallacy of first impressions, as, afterwards, we became as enthusiastic about the beauties of Corfu as its warmest admirers could desire. It is certainly one of the loveliest places

imaginable, and our principal difficulty henceforward will be to vary the expressions of admiration.

In spite of the rain, which did its best to make the town look dismal and dirty, we determined to drive out to the One Gun Battery, so called in the time of the English occupation. I think few drives can equal this one in beauty, and, after the extreme bareness and the glare of Malta, the richness and verdure of the country was beyond words refreshing and delightful. The road wound at one moment between groves of magnificent orange trees, laden with their golden fruit, contrasting with the deep green foliage; then at the next turn we could have fancied ourselves in an English country lane, with the softest green turf covering the ground, only that the trees instead of being oaks were grand old olives, grown to the size of forest trees, and here and there in the grass grew a great bunch of white irises,

with their sword-like leaves and delicate, spotless white flowers; then would come a hedge of prickly pear, with its harsh, rugged limbs and uncouth ways of growing, or a clump of the rough-leaved nespole (Japanese medlar), with their thick, dense foliage. And encircling it all, and closing in this beautiful picture, was the yet more beautiful frame of purple hills varying with every shade of colour, as now the sun and now the rain had the mastery, till at last they agreed to draw the battle, and a brilliant rainbow appeared, against which, and the indigo sky behind, the stems of the olives gleamed a ghostly, silvery white.

When the road reaches the terrace of the One Gun Battery, the view suddenly changes, and you have the sea before you, with the little island called Ulysses' Ship and another, lying at your feet. In spite of the heavy rain, we manfully made a little sketch of this impossible subject, and

then turned to go home. We hoped to have been able to see the king's garden on the way back, but we had to give up doing so, much to our regret.

It seems astonishing that more people do not go to spend the winter at Corfu. It is within easy distance of Brindisi, and would be a charming place in which to take refuge from the spring east winds in England.

There is not a great deal to see in the town ; but St. Spiridion must not be forgotten. The body of this saint is embalmed, and lies in a gold and glass coffin, exposed to view on great occasions. The coffin is very magnificent, but the crowd of people pressing into the little dark chapel, where a priest stood holding a taper at the feet, was so great, we could not obtain a very good view. One glimpse of the face, however, was more than enough : it was horrible and ghastly. St. Spiridion attended the Council of Nice, and is held in such



great veneration by the Corfiotes that, though they will swear to a falsehood without any scruple, yet if asked to swear by St. Spiridion, they dare not do so, but truth prevails.

The church, in which his body lies, has enormous silver lamps of great beauty hanging from the roof, but is not otherwise interesting.

The only expedition of any length that we made was to Peleka, a village about eight or ten miles from the town of Corfu, and situated high up on a mountain side.

The road to it is a very finely constructed one, but is in bad repair, and we came to the obvious conclusion that the English had made it, and that the Corfiotes had *not* mended it. The first few miles lead through a well cultivated plain, and then the road begins to ascend the mountain, but is too well engineered to be anywhere very steep, although it attains to a considerable

height; it ends abruptly in the little 'Place' of Peleka. A small Greek church occupies one side of this 'Place,' and, on benches ranged round it, against the walls of the cottages which form the other two sides the whole male population of the village appeared to be enjoying the *dolce far niente*. We engaged one of the men as a guide, and proceeded to climb the rocky pathway to the top of the hill, escorted by all the rising generation of Peleka.

These children were wonderfully good-looking; one boy and one girl especially were models of beauty, but we would willingly have dispensed with their company; they were as ragged and dirty as they could well be, and most persistent and irrepressible little beggars; it was difficult to resist the pleading dark eyes, but we had not provided ourselves with sufficient small cash to satisfy such a horde, so we were obliged to harden our hearts.

The top of the mountain is crested by a pile of great grey rocks, not unlike a Dartmoor tor, from the top of which there is what we should think to be an almost unequalled view, comprehending as it does the whole Island of Corfu with its rugged hills and verdant valleys, a sapphire blue sea sparkling on every side, and the magnificent range of mountains on the Greek main-land (whose wonderful colouring we find ourselves always wishing to expatiate upon, but abstain out of pity to our readers), forming an ideal background to the panorama.

On one side the descent is so abrupt that the valley quite lay at our feet, and it and the sides of the opposite hills were clothed with rich vegetation, through which villages and churches could be half seen as they lay nestled amongst their olive-yards and vineyards.

The people ought not to be poor with such a country and such a climate, but

they looked wretchedly so. Perhaps this might not be so much the case if the men abstained from spending the whole day sitting sunning themselves, pipe in mouth, which we judged to be their habit; for, when we returned from our two hours' absence, we found the Pelekaïtes still employed as when we first saw them, very happily doing nothing!

The drive down the hill was very pleasant, the view being beautiful all the way, and the road overshadowed by the finest old olive trees we had ever seen, as tall and as large in girth as timber trees.

The next day was the Greek Good Friday, and the little sloop of war lying at a buoy near us had her colours half-mast and yards topped. Many of the shops were shut, but the market appeared to go on as usual, it and the streets being crowded with dirty, picturesque peasants chaffering for their sheep, great golden oranges twice the size of any we get in

England, and every sort of garden produce.

We were to have sailed that morning, but the weather looked so threatening, our departure was postponed a few hours, and we took a last walk on shore; anything more horribly muddy than the narrow streets or more unpleasant than the damp, grimy crowd through which we had to shoulder our way it would be difficult to find, and we came to the conclusion that a tramp on a wet day in the town of Corfu was a thing to be eschewed. We consoled ourselves by buying red Russian leather slippers and olive-wood walking-sticks, and returning on board, wet and weary, sailed in the evening.

The weather turned fine suddenly and unexpectedly, and we were becalmed in sight of Corfu during the whole lovely starlight night.

The next afternoon found us off Avlona, and, as it was then blowing fresh and threatening worse, we beat right up the

bay, which is twelve miles long, and anchored at the head of it. It blew a gale that night and all the next day, so we were thankful to be so comfortably berthed.

We lay at the mouth of a wild Albanian valley, with high rocky hills, very strangely fissured, as if by glacial action, on each side, and a small river, or rather torrent, running down it ; a village or two in sight, but not near ; a most desolate spot.

Landing on a kind of island formed by the stream forking into two channels before discharging itself into the sea, we ranged about it escorted by some of the yacht's men armed with rifles, which were, however, not needed, either for the wild Albanian (who proved very polite) or for the wild pig (who was absent). It was, however, quite the right country for wild boar, and the peasants told us there had been some there a month or two before, but that they had now gone into the hills.

We flushed a good many wild duck and

a few snipe, kicked up a hare, and saw some hoopoes, but no one had a gun, so they were none the worse for our presence, and at last, tired of tumbling into bog-holes and struggling through rushes waist-high (for the island was nothing but a marsh, with a grassy hillock in the middle, on which cows and horses were feeding), we crossed the little river, some wading and some by means of a very tit-up-y dug-out, belonging to a man who lived in a little hut on the bank. He was a rough looking gentleman, in a dirty sheep-skin jacket, whose occupation was snaring fish by an arrangement of hurdles in the bed of the stream. He and the few other natives we saw were very civil, and, as one of them could talk a little French, we took the opportunity to bespeak some cow's milk.

*Cow's milk!* Perhaps we are unfortunately particular, but, for our readers' sake, we trust they cannot appreciate what that

meant to us, and that they have never undergone a course of *goat's* milk! This we had been enduring ever since our arrival at Malta, and oh! what words can describe the nastiness of that horrible liquid. We got to look at a goat with loathing, even when that unoffending animal was only dancing harmlessly up and down the street steps in Valetta, as is its wont. We drank our tea and coffee 'noir,' except in unguarded moments, after which the taste of the milk never left us throughout the day, but pervaded all our food, until we wished that Noah had forgotten the goat when he paraded the animals for embarkation. Faithfully did our Albanian promise us cow's milk for our breakfast next morning, when we assembled with smiling faces, and filled our coffee cups to the brim from the milk jug. Oh, horror! 'There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip,' says the proverb. Would that there had been on this



occasion, for then we should have been spared that noxious draught. Our trust in Albanian faith is gone for ever!

One other walk we took before leaving Avlona Bay, to the top of one of the hills, one mass of rugged blocks of rock and of rolling stones. The ascent was laborious, still more laborious (owing to the difficulty of maintaining one's equilibrium for two minutes together) was the descent, but we were rewarded by a fine view of the bay, and of the wild and mountainous coast, 'Ariadne' looking graceful, but very small, directly below us, and H.M.S. 'Hecla,' which had arrived the evening before, anchored two or three miles off, under the cliffs on the opposite side.

Owing to calms, and light, baffling winds, we did not sight the lighthouse on Point d'Ostro, at the entrance to the Bocche di Cattaro, until the afternoon of the third day after leaving Avlona Bay. We give a plan of this singular inlet of the sea,

reduced from the chart, as it would be difficult to describe it in words. We passed into Topla Bay soon after sundown, but could not proceed further in the darkness; and so deep are the soundings, that no anchoring ground could be found, and all night we had to stand off and on, the boats towing for a great part of the time.





## CHAPTER XX.

### A NICE BIT OF SEAMANSHIP.



NEXT morning the breeze freshened, but unfortunately was right in our teeth, and we had to beat up the Bocche. When we arrived at the very narrow channel called Le Catene, this was ticklish work, there being hardly room to put the ship about. Most admirably was she handled, and it was an interesting and exciting scene to lookers-on; the captain in the bows issuing his orders in a very quiet manner, utterly devoid of *fuss*, yet which showed that he expected the utmost prompt-

titude in carrying them out ; the second mate at the wheel, all eyes and ears ; a dozen men at the main-sheet ready to haul it in and jibe the yacht over ; the others at their different stations all keeping perfect silence as they watched the captain, and buckling to their work with a will, in obedience to his voice or gesture.

We entered the strait on the port tack, and made a very good board, appearing indeed to be sailing right up into the wind's eye, then jibed in the very narrowest part and held on to the last extremity, so much so that the yacht's fore-foot touched the soft ground, let go the anchor, swung round to it until her quarter was within a foot of the nasty, jagged-looking rocks, got the anchor up again with a run, the head sails filled, and off obedient 'Ariadne' flew, again on the port tack, clearing the point and finding herself floating safely in the gulf of Cattaro.

It was a very pretty bit of seamanship.

The wind dropping, we were a long time getting to our anchorage at the head of the gulf, and the boats had to tow again. The under-current was so strong that, in spite of their efforts, 'Ariadne' nearly drifted ashore in one place, and the anchor had again to be let go. When they got her head over the other way, she fetched round with a little breeze which opportunely arose, and was able to proceed the remaining mile or two of the distance unaided, but it was past one o'clock before we were anchored off the town of Cattaro, the whole distance from Point d'Ostro being about twenty-four miles. The captain, who had been up all night, and the men, who had had hours of hard towing-work to do, must have been very glad to hear the cable rattle through the hawse-hole.

It is difficult to imagine more beautiful and striking scenery than we passed through, this day; very high, dark, rocky mountains rise on each side, sometimes



CATTARO



straight from the edge of the water, but generally leaving a narrow riviera, and having their lower slopes cultivated, this belt of verdure contrasting with their barren, rugged rocks, and dotted with red-roofed villages, each of which possesses a church with a graceful campanile. We were all much impressed, and those among us who know the Italian lakes say that the Bocche di Cattaro resemble them, but surpass them in grandeur and beauty.

Directly we anchored, we were seized with the ambition to scale the castle heights, but, being told in the town that a permit was necessary, postponed doing so until the next morning, when we applied at the Commando-Platz for the required order. The officer, whose rank we were told was that of Oberst-Lieutenant, was exceedingly civil, but regretted his inability to oblige us, as no one was allowed to visit the fortress without a Central-Government order. Considering that this



formidable fortification must certainly date from the Middle Ages, this caution appeared to us excessive, but we were allowed to go within the lines as far as a little church which stands half way up the pathway to the fort. We passed through a locked door and zig-zagged up the rocky face of the hill escorted by an armed soldier, a good-natured-looking fair young fellow, but such a boy! All these Austrian soldiers seem to be not more than eighteen, but have a particularly simple, cheery, happy appearance.

The tiny little church, beyond which we had faithfully promised not to trespass, is built in a niche of the rock, and has a small plateau in front of it, which commanded a fine view of the bay and the opposite mountains, with 'Ariadne' lying at our feet. Peeping through the bars of the locked gate, we could perceive numbers of funny little votive offerings hanging from the church roof—models of ships,

and even two inches of rope suspended by a pink ribbon !

The rocky hill, half way up which we had climbed, is surmounted by the old fort, but completely commanded by the great mountains which tower above it, and against which it stands out in bold relief, while the fortified walls of the lines clamber up its precipitous sides in a singular and picturesque manner.

M. had her drawing materials with her, but did not dare use them, as the Austrian officer had told us that such a proceeding would entail instant incarceration. She indemnified herself by sitting on a doorstep in the rain and making a sketch of a most picturesque narrow street with an ancient archway across it and a peep of the old church of Cattaro beyond.

Fortunately she had been able to find her umbrella that morning, the search after which is one of her daily crosses. The boat is announced as ready to take

us ashore, and then there is a sound heard from below of going to and fro and an opening of cupboards and lockers ; then—silence. ‘Where is M.?’ asks somebody, and she is discovered seated in the middle of the main cabin with an expression of hopeless and settled despair written on her countenance. At first we used to be filled with anxiety, fearing that some terrible calamity had befallen her, but now we ask no questions, and promptly unearth the lost one, which is generally in some particularly evident place. One umbrella had to be abandoned in Paris, having vanished at the moment of our departure, and many have been the vicissitudes of its Algerian successor.





## CHAPTER XXI.

### CETTINJE.



BEING so close to the frontier of Montenegro, we felt that the cruise would have been imperfect if we did not see Cetinje; and towards the accomplishment of this object we set our minds with a fixed purpose. It was not easy to obtain correct information, strange as it may appear. One person said it would take six hours to ride there on mules, another five hours by carriage, a third certainly eight, and all agreed that it was better not to attempt it in one day. But, for us, it was

one day, or not at all; so at last, after interminable talk, we engaged a rattle-trap little carriage drawn by three horses, which we specially stipulated should be good ones, and went to bed early, in preparation for being called at 3.30 next morning.

It seemed hardly worth while having gone to bed when the dreaded summons came, but a cup of hot coffee (worthy cook!) cheered our spirits, and having eaten our breakfast on tip-toe, so to speak, in order to avoid waking the others, we stepped into the dingey, after the inevitable hunt after missing camp stools, and, dipping the oars gently into the water, rowed on shore, where we found the carriage waiting in readiness for us.

When we looked at the miserable little animals and then at the mountains towering above us, over which they were to drag five solid persons, we thought, '*Is it possible?*' and nothing but the recollec-

tion of the Bougie horses, which had somewhat the same dejected appearance, could have made us believe in their capability of performing the feat.

A faint glimmer of dawn was just appearing as we drove along the marina, and we felt very self-complacent and energetic as the driver cracked his whip, and we went off at a canter, accompanied by 'Bulla,' a nice, wiry tan-terrier, who accompanied us the whole of the way.

The road first wound along the end of the valley by an easy ascent till it reached the Austrian fort, placed on the crest of the hill, overlooking the open sea on one side, and the bay of Cattaro on the other. Here a lovely view burst on us. The sun was rising behind the mountains, but it had not reached the valley, which was still in dim shadow, and the sea lay, as it were, asleep at our feet, with the silvery light creeping over it, waiting for the sun to wake it to life. Now the real ascent

began, and a fly on a window pane was the nearest simile to which one can compare it. Looking at the road from the sea, as we had done before reaching Cattaro, it looked like a zig-zag scratched on the perpendicular side of the rock, and it was difficult to fancy oneself the fly that was to go up it. But so it was; and, as we crept higher and higher, everything was forgotten in the magnificence of the scene, as the sun caught the peaks of the distant mountains, leaving the nearer rocks still in purple shadow, and then, rising at last above them all, illumined the whole with a blaze of light. By this time we were getting near the summit of the pass, which, though not a very high one, appears to be so, as you start from the level of the sea.

Close to where the mule-track joins the carriage road (which, by the way, is a magnificent piece of engineering), we passed the mouth of a huge cavern, whose black

depths looked ghastly and horrible, and a little further on came to the frontier of Montenegro, indicated by a few stones sunk across the road, which, to tell the truth, was hardly a distinguishing mark.

It seemed as if the very moment we quitted Austrian territory the road became bad. It was mended with soft yellow stone, which made it very heavy for our poor little horses, notwithstanding the carriage being lightened by F. and Mr. K., who walked whenever it did not delay us.

We reached our half-way house about half-past seven, and while the horses rested for a few minutes and were watered, we all walked on towards Niegush.

This miserable little village is the birth-place of the present Prince of Montenegro, and, having formed somewhat romantic notions of the warlike mountain prince who so bravely defended his country, it was rather a shock to be told that a square



stone house, like a Scotch farm-house, surrounded by wretched little hovels out of the top of which the smoke rose wherever it could find an outlet, was the Summer Palace!

Anything more dreary than this valley of stones in which Niegush lies, it would be impossible to imagine. The stone hovels are barely distinguishable from the rocks on which they stand, were it not for the apologies for fields, a few feet in width and carefully walled in, which were dotted here and there beside them.

Having left Niegush behind us, we mounted a final set of zigzags, and, turning the corner at the highest point of the pass, we looked over an inexpressibly wild expanse of mountain scenery which seemed like a petrified sea turned to stone, as the waves rose and fell in one of Nature's wildest storms. Far away in the extreme distance lay the lake of Scutari, with the faintest indication of shadowy mountains

beyond, the whole forming a picture the grandeur of which it is difficult to describe.

After this, the rest of the drive was comparatively tame, till our interest was again excited, on coming in sight of Cetinje. Visions of a walled-in little town, with narrow streets and tall houses clamoring up the side of a precipitous cliff, a palace fort frowning from the topmost peak, a mountain torrent dashing below, and wild mountaineers, with their belts stuck full of swords and pistols, glowering from the walls—this was somewhat of the nature of the image we had formed in our minds, and I suspect that we are not alone in this respect.

What did we see? A flat little green valley, surrounded of course by mountains, a straight, white road like a parting down the middle, a white-washed chapel, a row of houses like cottages run up for navvies on a railway, a square house with a flag (the Winter Palace) and that was Cetinje!

We had been told there was nothing to see, but we had desired to see that nothing, and now we saw it!

In one or two respects we were amply rewarded. The wild mountaineers were there, and their costumes were splendid, with as many swords, and daggers, and pistols stuck in their belts as the heart of man could desire; and the interesting trifle of a grey-looking sort of shed, with an emerald green roof, on the top of a rock, where till lately the heads of Turks were exposed, gave animation to the scene.

There was an inn at Cetinje, and we drove up to the door, at which a Montenegrin waiter in costume was standing, known as such by the inevitable napkin thrown over his shoulder, and we walked in. A minute later, a magnificent individual with scarlet and gold jacket, embroidered cap, and loose blue knee-breeches, approached, and we felt a gentle flutter of anticipation.



CETTINJE.

HANNAH M.P.



Anything so beautiful could be nothing less than the prince's aide-de-camp, come to invite us to the palace as distinguished strangers. What was our disappointment when he turned out to be our host, come to ask about veal and mutton and suchlike prosaic necessities. We ordered our dinner, and, concealing our disappointment, looked out of the window, while it was preparing, and watched the picturesque groups of figures lounging about in the road.

Nothing can be more graceful and becoming than the dress of the Montenegrin men, and, as they are a remarkably fine race, it was a delight simply to watch them as they smoked their immense long pipes or walked about with that swinging stride and free, upright gait which belongs to these hardy mountaineers.

We had our misgivings as to the food, but we determined to make the best of it, and were somewhat reassured by some very decent soup. When, however, something

appeared which called itself veal, and was apparently every part of the animal served up indiscriminately, our hearts failed us, and, having previously struggled with a dish like a doormat in toughness and consistency, we felt that the unnatural tenderness of part of this second edition was worse, and we washed it down with some wine which had been kept in goat-skins, and consoled ourselves with some excellent coffee.

It was half-past eleven by the time we had finished our tempting repast, and, having at once spotted the only house which could belong to an Englishman, we went to call on Mr. and Mrs. Baring, the English Minister and his wife, who received us most kindly and hospitably. The complete banishment of living at Cetinje must be most trying, for no one ever goes there, and the drive across the mountains must be an effectual bar to intercourse with the outer and civilised world in the shape of Cattaro.

But, in spite of this, they had contrived to give a look of homeiness to their tiny house, which seemed astonishing, and before leaving we had a real English five o'clock tea, it being a mere matter of detail that it was at two instead of five.

We started on our return drive shortly afterwards, and varied the somewhat monotonous first part of the ascent by picking primroses, cowslips, violets, and cyclamen, which grew in quantities by the side of the road.

The sun was setting when we came in sight of the bay of Cattaro, and, as we passed through a cloud on the top of the mountain, it looked like a flood of glory shining red and gold through the mist; then the light faded away, and, as if we were not to lose one effect of changing beauty, the crescent moon rose high in the sky, shedding its transparent light in a silvery pathway over the sea. It was very beautiful, and, tired as we were when



at last we reached the yacht, we all felt it was well worth the eighteen hours we had spent on the expedition.

We had one other most delightful one,—this time in the steam launch. It was a grey cloudy afternoon, with sharp showers of rain, but under our awning these scarcely annoyed us, and the soft silvery light with occasional gleams of sunshine were almost more beautiful in this wild mountain scenery than unclouded sunlight. C. and M. longed to stop every moment as one point after another revealed fresh material for sketches, and it became a positive pain to see one lovely view after another glide past as one sketched as if for dear life, trying in vain to catch each changing effect as first one mountain then another stood out in light or shadow.

The mountains of Montenegro are certainly well named, for, though close by, the rocks are of a whitish grey, yet in the

shadow they look almost black, and there are bits of yellow stone here and there which would delight an artist's eye, while at the foot of the hills the young shoots of the pomegranate, which grows in great luxuriance, give a warm reddish colour, quite invaluable in a sketch.





## CHAPTER XXII.

### SAN GEORGIO AND SCARPELLO.



OPPOSITE the Catene are the two very small islands of San Georgio and Scarpello, and to the latter of these F. steered the launch, thinking there might be something to see in the little church of the Madonna Assunta which occupies the whole of the island.

It was very picturesque with its slender round campanile and its miniature green dome and apse, a great wooden Cross standing on the garden wall beside it, a little orange tree laden with fruit

hanging over the gateway and a cherry tree in flower.

We landed on a small stone terrace in front of the church door, where we met the priest, who was going off in his boat, but seeing our party turned back to receive us.

The little chapel, for it can hardly be called a church, is without any particular architectural beauty, but has nevertheless a wonderfully festive look inside. It is a mass of painting and decoration, and though the details are not good in themselves, yet the general effect is extremely pretty, and the silver lamps which you see hanging in all the churches of this country greatly add to its beauty.

Over the altar there hangs a miraculous picture of the Madonna and Child enveloped in silver robes, and held in great veneration by all the inhabitants of the surrounding country. The whole way round the walls of the nave is a broad belt about

three feet deep of silver votive offerings which have been let into the wall, side by side as close as they can go, which gives the appearance of a silver frieze running round the church.

The story of the miraculous picture was recounted to us by the priest, and is as follows :

In the middle of the seventeenth century, two fishermen found it lying on a solitary rock, in the middle of the inland sea, whither it had been miraculously transported from Negroponte in Eubœa. They proceeded to carry it back to their own home, but, in consequence of their presumption, first one fisherman fell ill, and then the other, so they determined to take it to the church of San Nicolo at Perastro, and there leave it, which was accordingly done. The picture was safely deposited in the church, and they thought that all was well, but on returning there

next morning, behold it was gone, and, on search being made, they found it had returned in the night to its original resting-place on the rock, and was there lying as the fishermen had found it. This happened twice in succession, and after that, such a distinct manifestation of the Madonna's will was not to be gainsaid, and the little chapel was built for it on the spot, all the country people bringing stones to help to lay the foundations in the sea. It has protected its votaries many times since then, and helped them to win a victory over the Turks at a critical period of their history, as the priest told us with perfect faith in its miraculous powers.

On the day of its festa, the 14th of May, it is carried in procession to Perastro, where it stays a week, and then is brought back with great rejoicing to its own island, when all the country people round assemble on the piazza, each fisherman bringing a

bag of stones to throw on the rock, and armed with guns and pistols, with which they fire *feux-de-joie* in honour of their beloved and miraculous Madonna Assunta.

The little church, its wonderful legend, and its votive offerings, all made us long to linger there, but time, alas! was flying by, and we had to return to the launch, where C. had been sketching in the interval. To our great joy, we found that she had provided us with the unlooked-for luxury of tea, so we steamed away opposite to Perastro, where, having backed and sidled and arranged ourselves in a perfect spot for a sketch, we tranquilly drew and ate our tea and drew again under the awning, while the rain poured overhead. Mr. K. and F. alternately criticised our efforts, and encouraged us to fresh exertions. How pleasant it was, and how sad when the time came to go home! for it was getting late, and we were still a long way from Cattaro.

However, we had to pack up our things and depart, and were just passing the church at Perastro, when we saw our friend the priest standing on the shore with some friends. Some good instinct prompted us to stop little 'Salamis' and go ashore to see if there were anything worth seeing, and well were we rewarded. In that little out-of-the-way place were more beautiful things than one could have believed possible, and we spent nearly an hour looking at all their treasures, which the 'Abbate' brought out for our benefit.

The church was nothing in itself, but its great silver lamps hanging all down the nave, as well as in front of the altar, were a sight of beauty, as, in the growing darkness, the light still caught their richly chased and beautiful outlines. A much larger church had been begun during the time of the Venetians, to whom all this part of the country belonged, and at the time of the Austrian occupation it was



left unfinished, partly on that account, and partly because the sea had risen and threatened to destroy the building. The apse and east end still remain untouched, and one could fancy that the workmen had just left off working, and were to return on the morrow, so unaltered has it remained ever since. A partition wall divides it off from the present building.

The first things shown us were the vestments, some of which are very fine, in particular an embroidered cope of Italian design, worked in delicately shaded flowers and gold; also a gorgeous chasuble of velvet and gold brocade, which had been the wedding gown of a 'sposa,' and looked as if it had been a model for a Paul Veronese. Then, leading us to the altar steps, they opened a door in the front of the altar, and disclosed a mass of silver reliquaries, crosses, chalices, silver hands, with the fingers raised in the attitude of

blessing, all stowed away in the inside. One after the other they were brought out for inspection, and most interesting they were. It would be impossible to enumerate them all, but among those that struck us most was a small silver cross about eighteen inches high, containing a piece of the true Cross in the centre, and all up the limbs of the cross, carved in relief, the emblems of the Passion, with angels' heads at each extremity, the base of it resting on a very large cut agate. The design was unlike any we had ever seen, and very beautiful.

One of the reliquaries, which resembled a richly carved silver casket, was precisely similar to those painted in Flemish pictures as carried by the Magi for their offering of frankincense to the Infant Saviour. A gold chalice, set with rubies and of very delicate workmanship, was the gift of a Turkish pasha to a priest of San

Nicolo, who presented it to the church. But the crowning thing of all was a very large silver processional cross, which is always brought out at the Festa of the Madonna Assunta, and which of its kind is the finest thing we had ever seen, both in design and workmanship. On the one side was the figure of our Lord on the Cross, and at each extremity the four evangelists according to the usual design. But at the foot an extra limb stood out on either side, on which were the figures of the Madonna and St. John standing as one sees them in early Italian pictures, while round the head of our Lord, and supporting the globe at the base, were numbers of angels' heads exquisitely carved. On the reverse side was the standing figure of the Madonna, with the Infant Saviour in her arms, and in the place of the evangelists the four Latin doctors of the Christian Church.

We could hardly take our eyes off this

beautiful cross, and regretted very much that there was no time to make a drawing of it, but they were anxious to bring out their other treasures, and in a minute, two men came in carrying a thing which looked like an immense jewel-box, and when the lid was taken off, to our intense surprise, we found it was covered, as close as they could be fastened to the velvet, with jewels, chains, rings, medals, orders, crosses, necklaces and earrings of every description, which had been given as votive offerings. Some of them were beautiful and their value must have been very great. There were old Venetian medals, a Turkish order in precious stones, a necklace of rows and rows of small pearls, a curious gold head ornament, set with pearls, with one very large single pearl of a curious shape (three pearls in one) hanging from it, big rings of topaz, amethyst, and diamonds, a very long gold chain set with jewels and a medal attached, presented by the Com-

mune on the last centenary, a miniature, long gold and pearl earrings, and many other things too numerous to mention.

These were only a part of their 'Tesoro,' but it was getting dark, and, much to our regret, we were obliged to leave, and finally tore ourselves away greatly astonished at the beautiful things we had seen. It was so totally unexpected in this little country village that, unless we had seen the things with our own eyes we should hardly have believed in their existence. We were told that, at Cattaro, the 'Tesoro' was even finer, but we had not had time to see it.

As we examined the jewels, the kind old abbate explained their histories to us, and showed us everything with such genuine appreciation and pride that one felt that it was as great a pleasure to him as to us. At the same time he seemed hardly aware that their possession was anything out of

the way, and the church was crowded with people looking on, with us; silver crosses and reliquaries were all left lying about with a perfect sense of security and confidence which was pleasant to see.

It was pitch-dark when we reached the yacht, and we were some time in distinguishing its friendly light at the gangway. As we came up the side we found T. anxiously watching for us, and wondering what had become of us during the five hours we had been away.

As the wind blew straight down Le Catene on our arrival, it of course blew straight up that channel on our departure from Cattaro next day, and we had to beat out, but got through successfully as there was a strong breeze. We left this lovely place with the greatest regret, all agreeing that no spot we had visited had pleased us so much. It must be a Paradise for sketchers, and one could spend weeks in

visiting the many picturesque villages which line the shores of these charming Bocche, and in making expeditions into the mountains.





## CHAPTER XXIII.

### DALMATIAN TOWNS.



HE wind falling light, we did not make Ragusa until the middle of the following day, and we remained there only a few hours; long enough to see the church and admire the very fine old 'Palazzo della Signoria' (which is not unlike the Doge's palace at Venice in miniature), and the curious streets that ascend in steps on each side of the town, which is built in a valley, the main street running up the centre.

The Duomo, dedicated to St. Blasius,



was originally founded by Richard Cœur-de-Lion, but, as it now stands, is not of nearly so ancient a date, and is not remarkable except for the extraordinary collection of relics and treasures it possesses. These are preserved in a side-chapel, the walls of which are covered with red-painted shelves, divided from each other, and into niches by thick gilt mouldings, each niche containing some saint's relic, generally a limb, or some portion of the poor man's body, in a silver or metal case, made to represent what it encloses. There were several heads, too, that of St. Blasius being encased in a most beautiful casket (or skull-cap) made to fit it, which is inlaid with enamelled pictures of kings, emperors, and saints dating from the fourteenth century and brought from Constantinople; the original case, of early Byzantine work, was so much injured in the great earthquake which nearly annihilated Ragusa in 1667 that it had to be restored, but fortunately the enamels were

unhurt, and were reset by a Venetian in the most beautiful and delicate gold and silver jeweller's work conceivable: it is a copy of a Byzantine imperial crown, and is a very fine work of art.

We also saw one leg, both arms, and other bits of St. Blasius, and a silver arm, decorated to represent the native costume, which contains the arm-bones of three peasant saints martyred by the Serbs.

Another remarkable and very valuable object shown us was a large dish or charger, with an ewer of silver-gilt, covered with most elaborately worked silver tortoises, snakes, and other reptiles: the silver has been purposely discoloured, and the effect is more curious than beautiful. It is believed to be the work of a Nuremberg artist of the sixteenth century.

Behind the high altar hangs an Assumption of the Virgin Mary by Titian, but it is not a very beautiful picture.

The priests were much interested in the

'Canonico Inglese,' whom they addressed as Monsignore and catechised as to all the arrangements of an English cathedral. They were exceedingly kind, and took much trouble to show us all their treasures.

As soon as we returned on board, we cast off from the buoy to which we had made fast during our short stay at Ragusa, and, not having lowered the big canvas, were soon sailing out again, right into the lovely sunset. Of course the wind soon headed us—that was our general fate—but there was plenty of it, and all night and next day we had a splendid sail, tacking in and out of the numerous islands which fringe the coast of Dalmatia. The breeze dropping towards night, it was not until the afternoon of the second day after leaving Ragusa that we anchored in the port of Spalatro.

This place is also called Spalato, which is correct, as the name is a contraction of *Salonæ Palatium*, nearly the whole town

being built within the walls or constructed from the materials of the enormous palace built by Diocletian, who was born at Salona a mile or two off. Here he retired to live after his abdication.

This palace covered more than seven acres of ground, and nearly the whole circumvallation remains, as well as the chief gateway, called the *Porta Aurea*, and any number of colonnades, archways, and other remains of this grand edifice are to be met with in every street—almost in every house—one sees.

The cathedral was the temple of Jove, and is very nearly in its original state, with a double tier of great monolith red granite columns surrounding the circular centre, and a white marble frieze representing *Diana at the chase*. It is a fine and impressive building, and has been well restored in the present century, but the enormous modern white capitals to the old pillars are staring and ugly.

The tower, or campanile, is now being restored, and is quite concealed by the scaffolding, which is a work of art in itself, having easy flights (eight or nine of them) of railed-in stairs to the very top, with broad platforms at each landing. The first two tiers, with fine antique columns, are Roman, the remainder mediæval, and very curious. We climbed to the top, and were rewarded by a very fine view, which enabled us to realise the size and magnificence of Diocletian's great palace. Not far from the cathedral is a beautiful little temple of Esculapius, now a baptistery, the white, sculptured, marble font being made out of a heathen altar. In the museum there are any amount of Roman antiquities, bronzes, glass, and pottery, sculptured stones, statues (mostly imperfect), gems, and intaglios. The collection is well arranged and well cared for.

Spalato reminded one of Rome at every turn, not only, we grieve to confess, owing

to the number and interest of its antiquities, but also from the variety and ubiquity of its *smells*! Oh, those smells! They were indescribable, and made sketching an impossibility. They even pursued us on board, and made night hideous, so that no one much regretted it when the word was given to weigh, and we continued our voyage.

Before we left, however, we determined to visit the little town of Trau, a perfect gem of beauty in its way. It is built partly on the mainland and partly on an island, the two parts being connected by a bridge, which moves so as to admit of the passage of ships. As we drew near to it, and came in sight of the slender, graceful campanile of the cathedral, with its marvel of delicate tracery, we could not contain our admiration, and a nearer inspection only served to increase it.

C. having gone round in *the* vehicle of the place, the rest of us, passing through

an admiring crowd on the quay, went by a shorter way through the narrow streets, which were more picturesque than words can say, and came out on the piazza of the cathedral. We despair of describing how pretty this little piazza was. On one side of it was the cathedral, with its wide, deep portico and baptistery opening on to it, both one mass of richly carved ornament, and on the other side the beautiful ruined columns of some ancient building, with the winged Venetian lion carved on the wall, and, rising high above the church, the campanile with its tracery of delicate stone work.

Alas ! that our time was so limited. We went into the church, which looked solemn and beautiful in its shadowy dimness, with the silver lamps glistening out of the darkness, and, followed as usual by our select body of admirers, were shown all the treasures it contained.

We could not help being amused by an

enthusiastic custode who, having shown one of us the monument of San Giovanni d'Orsino, who is held in great veneration at Trau, pointed out to him a small hole in the top of the tombstone, from which he maintained a fragrant perfume was wont to ascend to the nostrils of the faithful, and nothing would satisfy him but that he should smell for himself whether it were not so. Mr. K. was wanting perhaps in faith, but, though he complied with the request, his perceptions were not sufficiently keen to be able to discern the desired 'odour of sanctity,' though I believe he left the custode in happy ignorance of his want of appreciation !

The vestments in the cathedral are very fine ; one set in particular of dark red velvet, such as cannot be had now for love or money, with the cross worked in curious old embroidery of the fifteenth century, was magnificent. The Viennese had made great efforts to obtain this, and offered to



purchase it for a very large sum of money, but the people of Trau were too wise to be tempted, and refused to part with it. The old white-haired sacristan showed them with a pride and delight which was pleasant to see, and evidently thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity of displaying their beauties.

We could hardly tear ourselves away from lovely little Trau, but it had to be done, and we only regretted having no time to make a sketch.

The costumes all along this coast are beautiful, and varied with each place. Sebenico, I think, carried the day for the dress of the women, and Montenegro for that of the men, though the coarse brown jackets of the latter at Sebenico, with their thick tufts of red floss silk sewn down the front, were wonderfully pretty. The white coif of the women was most becoming, and was differently worn by each individual. Many of the girls were

fair-haired and extremely pretty, but this was almost the only place we remarked much beauty, and perhaps this is hardly to be wondered at, for the lords of creation avail themselves of their supremacy with but little scruple, and the women in Montenegro and Dalmatia are apparently beasts of burden for their lords and masters, who lounge about and look beautiful, while the women slave and toil, carrying heavy weights or rowing deeply-laden boats and doing all the drudgery. It excited much indignation and contempt among our crew to see the fair sex thus put upon.

We had meant to run for Zara, so as to enable Mr. K. to catch the steamboat to Trieste, for his all too short holiday had come to an end, and he was obliged to return to England.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

## SEBENICO.



AFTER we had got well out of the islands, the wind rose with such violence, while the glass went down so persistently and rapidly, that C. suddenly made up her mind to put in to Sebenico, and so the ship's head was turned, and, to T.'s and M.'s great relief, in another hour or two they were again in smooth water and beyond the reach even of the heavy swell.

We have never ceased congratulating ourselves that the weather obliged us to

turn back that day, and put into that most fascinating place.

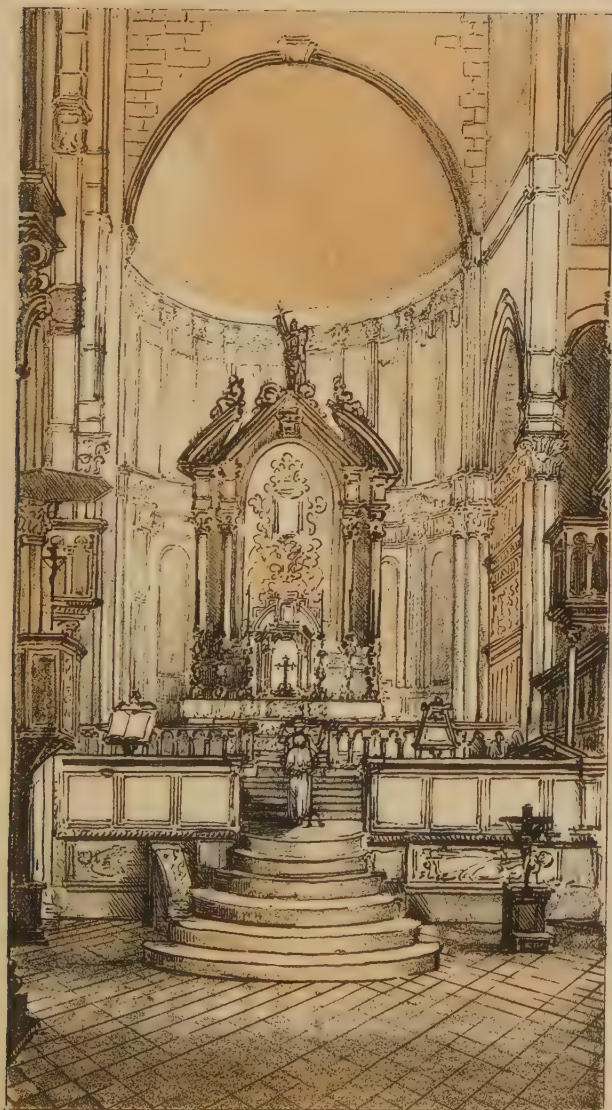
The entrance to the harbour is so narrow and tortuous that every moment it seemed as if we were sailing straight on shore; and when at last we were comfortably moored to our buoy, and had time to look round, the wonder was, how we had ever arrived there.

We caused great excitement in the little town, and our ways and customs were evidently minutely observed and commented on.

The cathedral is the principal point of attraction, and it was without doubt by far the most beautiful which we had seen. The nave is separated from the choir, which is raised six steps above it, by a low screen of rose coloured and white marble, and at either side are two very beautiful 'amboni,' from which the epistle and gospel are read. The little arches which form the balustrade are perfect models of

delicate workmanship and form. Advancing between the choir stalls, you again mount three steps to a higher level in front of the altar, and above that again, four steps higher still to the exquisite marble altar rails within which stands the high altar itself, raised three steps above the whole. Thus there is a gradual rise of sixteen steps from the extremity of the nave to the east end of the choir, where the altar stands conspicuous from every part of the church.

The simplicity of purpose in the design, which is not frittered away in various directions that would distract the eye, but concentrates the whole attention on the one central object, is most striking and unlike anything we had ever seen. Some of the capitals of the arches are well worth careful examination; one hidden away in a dark corner, on which is carved a hen brooding over her chickens, is very quaint and full of feeling. The baptistery, which



SEBENICO CATHEDRAL.



is down below in a sort of crypt, has some curious carved stone work in it, and is very interesting.

We spent most of our time in the cathedral, and all tried to carry away some little remembrance of it, however unsatisfactory, and spent most of our time there sketching. At last the good people of Sebenico became so much interested in our proceedings that it grew rather embarrassing.

The custode did his best to protect the 'principessas' and 'monsignores' from too much attention, but his protection was worse than their affectionate interest, for he would not even permit them to say their prayers near us, but hustled them away without any scruple. In vain we remonstrated; away he went, and returned in a few minutes with one of the police, who entered the church and began turning out some peasant girls, who were kneeling there in their picturesque costumes making lovely pictures at every turn.



This was more than we could stand, and, having begged him to desist, he went out, but only to keep more effectual guard outside; for, when we came out of the church, we found two of the police with switches in their hands keeping at bay a picturesque crowd of gaily-dressed men and women, any one of which would have made an artist's model. We tried to escape into the town. Not a bit of it—on they followed, and the crowd after us, and finally we, not the crowd, were driven from the field.

As we went towards the quay, we thought we would accept an invitation given us by the Bishop's secretary to go into the palace, where, he said, 'I could show you the lower rooms.' As we were being conducted into the ante-room, the Bishop appeared and took us into his reception-room, where he begged us to be seated.

With great indiscretion, M. was hover-

ing over a yellow sofa, and just going to sit down on it, when she mercifully remembered that to sit on a sofa before being invited to do so would be pushing in the extreme. So, with a dexterous change of movement, she followed E.'s example and sat down on a humble, armless chair, from which, however, with becoming reluctance, she allowed herself to be transferred, under pressure, to the more honourable sofa.

The Bishop was a dear old man, with a kind, benevolent countenance. He had been twelve years Bishop, and was a native of Sebenico. He took us into his official reception-room where he receives his clergy seated on a throne under a canopy like a royal throne and daïs, and showed us where, from a window between the palace and the cathedral, he could see all that was going on in the church, and assist at the services if he wished to do so. He sent C. a present of some prints of the

church, and, after promising to send him some copies of the photographs F. had taken, if they turned out successful, we made our adieus and returned to the yacht.

One reason for going to Sebenico was, that we might visit the falls of the river Kerka, which we determined to attempt one day.

Our party of six, with the captain and three others, started directly after luncheon in the steam launch on this expedition of twelve or fourteen miles. The first half of the way was a continuation of the arm of the sea on which Sebenico is built, with the same low, monotonous, stony hills which flank the entrance to the harbour. A more dreary, desolate country it would be hard to imagine: possibly Arabia Petræa may be as barren, but we doubt it! There was scarcely a sign of vegetation to be seen, though here and there a few miserable little enclosures betrayed an attempt at cultivation. About six miles up, the

channel widens into a broad basin, called Lake Proklian, with various creeks or inlets, up several of which we made excursions, mistaking them for the river's mouth, and here grew vines and fig-trees, and patches of corn, and habitations lay scattered about, which made one feel less in the desert.

Our third attempt proved right, and we proceeded up the Kerka, the rocky banks of which, though as barren, were higher than those we had passed—indeed, some of the cliffs were very fine—and the broad river runs deep up to their very base. We passed a pretty, prosperous-looking village, Scardona, the deep red roof of its campanile showing brilliantly against the dark hills, and a ruined castle on a rocky eminence above it. Half-an-hour's steaming now brought us in view of the falls, where the whole river projects itself down from a great height; but this it does in separate cascades of all sorts

and sizes, from the chief and very big one down to the veriest little driblet, these being divided from each other by rocks, which are completely overgrown with vegetation, the whole covering a very wide area.

The first sight of this mass of greenery with silver threads running through it was disappointing, and reminded one of the spun-glass waterfalls of one's childhood, but on a nearer approach the chief fall assumed fine proportions; and when we landed and walked up to a path from which we could look down upon it, we became aware that it was very grand indeed. A vast volume of water descends in a succession of falls (the height of the principal one of these is, we were told, twenty-five feet), the whole being blended into one mass of seething water and white foam, and sending up clouds of spray. E., who had never seen any big waterfall, was full of admiration, but even those

who had (and one of our party had been to Niagara) considered this one of Kerka to be exceedingly fine.

M. made a sketch through a rocky archway, which made a pretty frame to the fall, and was surrounded, as usual, by an admiring crowd of natives, who, however, are most gentle and civil in their manners, and very obliging. They looked miserably poor and ill, and their faded but picturesque dresses were so tattered and torn, one wondered how they kept them on at all. E. saw one boy who had fastened his by means of little wooden skewers.

The wind had now begun to rise, and when, on our return trip, we got into Lake Proklian we found it quite rough, and were obliged to cover ourselves up to keep dry.

In the narrow channel it was smooth again, and we were in the act of complimenting the little 'Salamis' (as the steam launch is called) on the speed with which

she was flying along, when she suddenly and quite instantaneously came to a dead stop, and on examination it was found that her propeller had fouled an old basket, and a mass of weed, which had collected about it. It was a relief to find there was nothing amiss with the engines, but it took some time to clear away the hamper (during which process the sweeps had to be got out to keep us from drifting ashore), and by the time the screw was free again, darkness was coming on. Luckily there was a moon, for it would have been awkward not to be able to see our way, as now the wind had risen considerably, and as we approached Sebenico we met a really heavy sea, which deluged us with spray. Nor were we destined to get in without further adventure, for the captain, who was steering with the wheel, amidships, suddenly gave the word 'Stop her!' exclaiming that the wheel-gear had carried away: 'Salamis' was heading right in for the rocks, to which

we were quite close, and on which big waves were breaking, and we might have come to serious grief but for the smart way in which the captain jumped aft, shipped the tiller, and got her safely started again.

The little boat behaved wonderfully well, showing herself extremely buoyant (although so heavily laden), and never shipping a sea; but on board the yacht they hardly expected us to get back, and the weather became so rapidly worse that, had we been a quarter-of-an-hour later, the captain was of opinion that we should not have been able to do so. Where we should have spent the night, it is hard to say.

As we passed the town, we burned a couple of blue lights to warn 'Ariadne' of our approach, and heard afterwards that our appearance had created quite a sensation on shore. I daresay the little white craft plunging through the water,



with the clouds of spray flying over and half concealing her, lit up by the blue lights, must have been an extremely pretty sight.

It was nearly nine o'clock when we sat down to dinner in the comfortable main-cabin, and as we heard the wind roaring round the ship, and whistling through the rigging, we congratulated ourselves, not only on our safe return, but upon being moored in such a snug little harbour. This gale turned into a bora, and lasted several days. The bora is a wind peculiar to the Adriatic, and the fear of it had been held over our heads like a bugbear ever since we entered these waters. It generally blows from the north, varying to north-east, and Admiral Smyth, who derives the name from Boreas, gives a fearful account of the violence with which it sometimes rages, and says that 'ships caught by it generally let fly everything to receive the first blast, then immediately

bear up to the southward to seek safety in any port they can fetch, or remain under bare poles until it is exhausted.\* One peculiarity of the bora, which came under our own observation, is that it will subside entirely, there will be a dead calm for a few minutes, and then the gale will suddenly spring up again and rage with redoubled fury.

The evening after our expedition to Kerka the Austrian-Lloyd steamer came in, *fourteen hours* late, from Spalato (which is distant only fifteen miles!) and with no passengers on board; she sailed next morning on her northward course, but with little anticipation of reaching Zara in time for the mail.

The storm raged on, and thankful we were to be safe in our snug little harbour, but alas! 'Residences' and appointments must be kept, and, when the direct mail-boat for Trieste put in an appearance,

\* 'The Mediterranean,' by Rear-Admiral W. H. Smyth.

Mr. K. had to leave us and return home, though we would gladly have prolonged the gale a little longer so as to delay his departure. We followed very shortly after, and made a run without a history to Zara, which shows that it was more or less a happy one.





## CHAPTER XXV.

### ZARA AND POLA.



ARA had quite an air of civilization about it when we arrived there. Like all the towns along the east coast of the Adriatic, a carriage inside the town was unheard of, or even a horse or donkey, but there was an esplanade with a row of hideous white houses, along which they were permitted to pass, and there was even a kind of embryo Marshall and Snelgrove, and the possibility of making one or two much needed purchases, such as a parasol, and a shady hat for F. For this latter,

however, we had a long search, till at last a passer-by volunteered assistance and conducted us to the best hat-depository in Zara, where the shopman much annoyed F. by trying each hat on his own head before offering it to him. Finally a satisfactory one with a double crown which opened and closed at will was procured, which apparently fitted both F. and the shopman's head, and so comfortable did it turn out to be, that it was with reluctance F. left it in the yacht when we returned to pot-hats, bonnets and veils, and other signs of the fashionable world.

If we had come to Zara first we should have thought it beautiful, but I suppose we were a little bit *blasé* by this time, for, after the other places we had seen, it seemed tame in comparison, and, except for the costumes, it had no particular attraction for us.

Yes, it had one attraction which I have not mentioned, and this was a dangerous

one. Zara is the birthplace, nursery, and home of all true liqueurs, and every imaginable kind is to be procured here of the first quality and of seductive cheapness. I should be afraid to say how many wooden cases containing bottles by the dozen were stowed away in the spare cabin, and I must hasten to add that many of them were for presents to friends in England, otherwise it would hardly sound creditable to our habits of moderation. We became so knowing in the respective flavours of Mareschino, Kümmel, Arancia, &c., that we might almost have considered ourselves qualified tasters for the trade.

M. had a special weakness for Rose liqueur, which she thought quite excellent, having the taste of essence of rose beatified, but she fears it was a weak and feminine taste, for it was not shared by those who knew better. The only one which was really nasty was one with an unpronounceable name, and a particular favourite of

the Zara people, and supposed to be an excellent stomachic. One taste of this was sufficient, and the man who specially opened a bottle for our benefit, making sure we should think it delicious, was destined to be disappointed, for we could not make up our minds to purchase it.

E. and M. spent one very pleasant afternoon at Zara (for we were detained there longer than we had expected by stormy weather), and being tired of narrow streets and picturesque houses we determined to take a walk into the country. We had no adventures, but walked along a pretty country road and enjoyed the fresh smell of the earth after the rain, and picked bunches of a beautiful kind of bee orchis, and almost fancied ourselves in England. For who that has been travelling abroad for several months, and 'doing' each place conscientiously, but knows the heart sinking that, despite all effort of will, arises on

hearing of 'the very interesting remains which it is a positive duty to visit, or the unique specimen of early twelfth century work which all lovers of art must long to see,' and give anything to escape from sight-seeing for one happy day at least.

And so we escaped, and walked down the pretty green lanes, till we came to a wild garden overgrown with weeds and grass, but with masses of white and yellow banksia roses growing in wild profusion and with such a wealth of blossom that it left hardly any leaves visible. We asked the gardener if we might have a few roses, and he tore down whole branches and gave them to us, till our hands were so full we could hold no more, and we returned to the yacht laden with flowers, with which we decorated the cabins till they looked almost like a garden.

F. and C. meanwhile had been more



virtuous, and came back so full of the marvellous beauty of St. Simeon's shrine that, as was quite sure to happen, we felt quite small, and as if we had missed our opportunities.

We had seen it ourselves the day before, but not so well as they had done, for fortunately the priest belonging to the church was there when they went, and he uncovered it for them.

It consists of an entire silver gilt sarcophagus, in which lies the body of the saint embalmed. Both the inside and outside are equally beautiful in workmanship, and consist of a series of bas-reliefs descriptive of scenes in St. Simeon's life, and what befell his body after death. It is, I should imagine, almost an unique specimen of the kind, belonging to the fifteenth century, and indeed all true lovers of art (despite any weariness of weak mind or body) should not fail to visit it, for it is most curious and interesting.

The history of what befell St. Simeon's body before it finally found a resting-place in its golden shrine is too wonderful not to be related, and the priest recounted it all to them.

It seems that a certain devout knight, when he was in the Holy Land, whither he had gone as a crusader, discovered the body of St. Simeon, and was seized with the desire to convey it back to his own country. Nothing daunted by the difficulties and dangers of the task, he set out, and for a time all went well; but when they approached the coast of Dalmatia, and came near to the town of Zara, the saint manifested a strong desire to be landed in this spot, and to effect his purpose he caused a 'burrasca' to arise, and the storm was so high that the ship was wrecked and the knight was drowned, while the body of the saint was cast ashore in the plain wooden coffin in which it had been placed.

At first the inhabitants of the town thought that it contained only the remains of some ordinary man, and took no heed of it; but the saint, appearing to the chief ruler of the place, made known to him that it was indeed his own body which had thus been cast on their shores. Whereupon the chief men of the town went down in haste to the spot where the body was lying, and brought it in state to the church, still in its unadorned wooden coffin.

Now after a time, when the body of St. Simeon was peacefully resting in the church which the people of Zara had built to his memory, there came the Princess Elizabeth of Hungary to visit and pray at his tomb, and she, being filled with an ardent longing to possess even a small relic of the saint, as she knelt in front of his body, secretly broke a finger from off his hand and hastily concealed it in her bosom.

Having committed this sacrilege, as she left the church a sudden sickness seized

her, and though she carried back to her home the precious relic, yet the sickness growing more grievous, so that she was at the point of death, at the last she sent for the priest, and confessed the sin of which she had been guilty in stealing the finger of St. Simeon.

He forthwith enjoined upon her immediate restitution, and in obedience to his command she set forth as soon as she was able for the journey, and travelled back to Zara, where, kneeling in humble penitence before St. Simeon's tomb, she first covered the sacred finger with rings from off her own hand, and then restored it to the saint, and, thus having performed the deed of restitution to the utmost of her power, her sickness left her, and she recovered, and went back to her own country.

In expiation of her theft, she then caused the magnificent golden shrine to be made, and, as soon as it was completed three years later, the body of St. Simeon was

transferred to it, and has remained there ever since. Before leaving the church, C. was presented with a little packet of holy dust to take away with her as a relic.

Contrary to our expectations, the next day was fine, and in the early morning we hoisted sail and started on our way to Pola.

Of course, as we were sailing out of the harbour, the wind headed us, and gave 'Ariadne' any amount of trouble; but she accomplished her task with her usual skill, and cleared the port with no worse result than that of hindering the entrance of the mail steamer for some time. Of the ways and means by which we got out we cannot speak definitely, as we were snug in our berths at the time; but we heard that the whole of the shore and the quays were crowded with spectators—early as was the hour—admiring the beautiful English yacht and her proceedings.

The whole of that day we sailed between the islands and the ugly low-lying coast; but the sea was smooth and the wind fair, and it was very pleasant. The night brought rain, thunder, and lightning, with every appearance of heavy weather; but it never came, and we crossed the dreaded Gulf of Fiume, 'the home of the bora,' as it is called, in perfect peace and quietness, *all* on board much enjoying our morning's sail.

Our destination was Pola, the most important naval arsenal possessed by the Austrians, and we sailed into this fine harbour early in the afternoon. A man-of-war boat coming alongside told us we ought to go into the mercantile harbour, which no one wished to do, so we pleaded yacht-privileges, continued our course, and laid hold of a buoy not far from the port-admiral's flag-ship. We were soon boarded by a naval officer, to whose feelings we appealed in our best German, and he was

most civil, and said he was sure the matter could be arranged. In an hour he returned with the required permission from the admiral, merely asking us to move to another buoy close to the dockyard, as we were in the fair-way, and offering us a tug for the purpose. Nothing could be more obliging, and we lost no time in calling on the admiral, Baron Pitner, to express our thanks. He and Baroness Pitner returned our visit next day, and were most obliging in offering to show us anything we wanted to see, or help us in any way. We regretted that the shortness of our stay prevented us from availing ourselves of their kindness.

Several ships of the Austrian fleet were out cruising—we had sighted them in the distance as we arrived—but there were a good many vessels of various descriptions lying in harbour, both in and out of commission, and they looked smart and clean.

There was a good deal of building going on in the yards, countless steam launches were hurrying about, and the place looked thoroughly alive and busy. The Austrian fleet is not large, but we were very favourably impressed with its appearance as far as it was possible to judge from the little we saw of its ships and officers.

*The* lion of Pola is its Roman amphitheatre, said to be the largest existing one after the Coliseum, and certainly a very magnificent building in excellent preservation. The soft, yellowish tinge of the stone of which it is built is particularly beautiful, and some of the apertures (windows?) over the entrance doorways are filled in with open-work stone tracery, while the mouldings along the top are beautiful.

Pola contains other Roman remains : a fine temple, some columns of the ancient Forum, supporting the overhanging floor



of the town-hall in the 'Piazza del Foro,' etc.; but what we appreciated more than all was the drive we took to the Kaiser Wald, about a mile from the town, a wood which contains few trees of any size, but is a *real wood*, a thing which we had not seen for ages; the oaks and chestnuts and ash-trees all growing as they liked—a tangled mass of fresh spring greenery; honeysuckle in full flower winding itself all over them, many-coloured wild-flowers springing up at their feet, and blackbirds and thrushes singing in their branches.

The delicious verdure was indeed refreshing to the eyes after the barren and dried-up scenery to which they had for so long been accustomed, and we proved that we had not been spoilt by the delights of foreign travel, but that our British hearts were still in the right place by exclaiming in chorus,

'This is prettier than anything we have seen! It's just like England!'

We returned on board laden with honeysuckle and May and greenery, and shall always retain a pleasant recollection of the verdant little Kaiser's Wald of Pola.





## CHAPTER XXVI.

### HOMEWARD BOUND.



FTER spending two nights in the Austrian port, we left it for Venice, and to some of us it caused a pang to think that we were starting on our last sail, and that when 'Ariadne' next hoisted her big main-sail and spread her 'muslin' to the breeze, we should be far away, pounding along in a prosaic train, or shut up within the four walls of a stuffy hotel.

Making our obeisance to the admiral's flag on board the 'Hapsburg' as we passed, we sailed out of harbour with a fair wind, encountering the Austrian ironclads 'Her-

zog Albrecht,' 'Tegethoff,' and a third with an illegible name, returning from their cruise, and the 'Elizabeth,' mother of the torpedo boats, with about twelve of her children manœuvring round her. Fine and very fast boats they seemed, and one had the impudence to make a circle round us, passing so close under our bows that an extra puff of air must have sent us right into her, which would have served her right.

We were becalmed within sight of Pola nearly all day, but towards evening were able to lay our course for Venice with a nice leading wind. This, shifting to the north-east about ten o'clock, rose to a gale, and we had a very rough time, for we were off Venice by midnight, and, it being impossible to enter the lagoons in the dark, we were obliged to knock about under as little canvas as possible, or lie to, until the sun rose, when we anchored in shelter. We were, on the whole, rather

pleased to find that we *had* encountered a bora—a mild one, it is true, but still an undoubted bora, and quite as severe as was desirable.

After breakfast, a tug took us in charge, and conveyed us through the lagoons to Venice. One or two of us had never seen the Queen of the Adriatic, and were on the tiptoe of expectation. The approach by sea certainly acted rather as a damper on their enthusiasm, but the delight of the first *near* sight of the unrivalled town was all the greater. Through miles of lagoon we were towed, the grey sea and sky and flat low-lying land reminding one of Holland or the mouth of the Thames; while of Venice in the distance the most conspicuous points visible were some tall smoky chimneys and a large, square, and apparently white-washed building, which, to the dismay of E., M. announced to be the Palace of the Doges.

Then a turn of the lagoon brought us

close to an old corvette, with an admiral's flag flying at the fore, which we duly saluted—we passed a long, low building, which we were told was the exhibition, opened the previous week by the king—then the obnoxious chimneys disappeared in some mysterious, magical manner, and the Palace of the Doges turned into—the Palace of the Doges! Who can describe its beauty? *We* shall not attempt what has so often been done by abler pens, but leave it to our readers to imagine the pleasure of lying in a comfortable yacht, troubled by none of the noise and other drawbacks of an hotel, within three hundred yards of the piazzetta, St. Mark's and the palace in all their glorious beauty close under our eyes, gondolas skimming around us—all taking us back to the days of Canaletto; while the magnificent P. and O. steamer 'Gwalior,' lying close to us, was almost alone in recalling to us that we lived in this bustling nineteenth century.

Our last week on board was certainly not the least pleasant of our cruise, and, though it would be difficult to be disappointed in Venice, yet the reality even surpassed the expectations of those of us who had not seen it.

Floating along in those softly-cushioned gondolas, under the shade of lofty palaces or stern dark prison walls; standing in awestruck wonder before Tintoretto's, or dazzled in front of Titian's 'Assumption;' gazing in silent reverence at Bellini's holy and saintlike Madonna and Child; or else passing from the bright sunshine of the piazza, with its flights of grey pigeons circling round one's head, into the solemn mystery and gloom of St. Mark, where dim shadows of the past seem to mingle with golden visions of the future—these are things not to be described, at least by us. The 'Stones of Venice' have cried aloud once and made their voices heard with a sound of music which will echo through ages

yet to come, and all minor sounds must be silent before the major and dominant chord of that noble harmony.

On May 21st we bid adieu to the 'Ariadne,' our good and faithful friend through fair weather and foul for so many weeks, and, leaving poetry behind us under the guise of snowy white sails and bright blue sea, returned to humdrum prose in the shape of a puffing, panting train, with volumes of thick black smoke.

The rest is told in three words—Milan, Schweizerhof, Charing-Cross. There only remains yet one more word to add, and perhaps that is the best of them all—**HOME!**

THE END.









Joseph Carroll,  
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March 14<sup>th</sup>  
1947.

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